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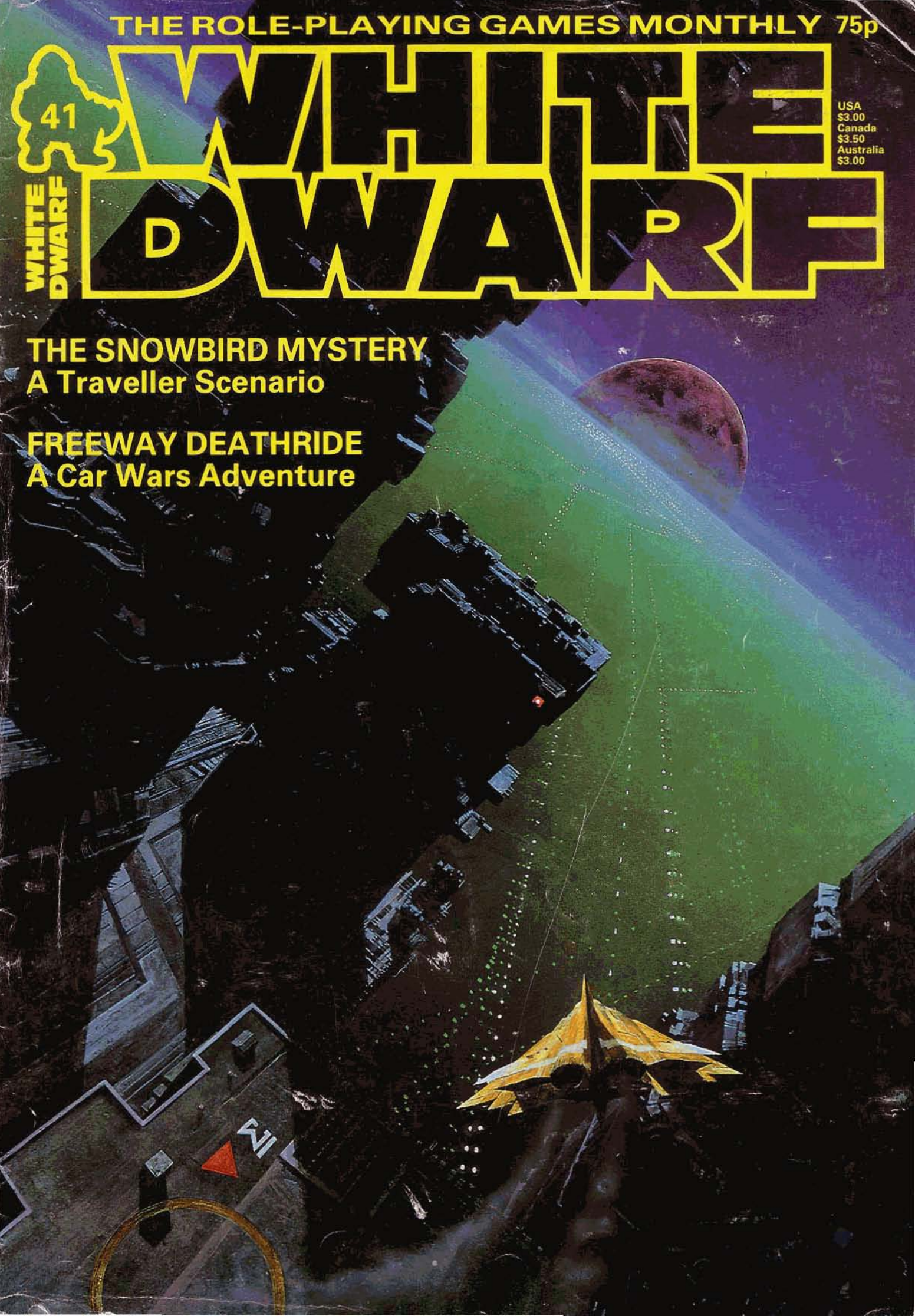

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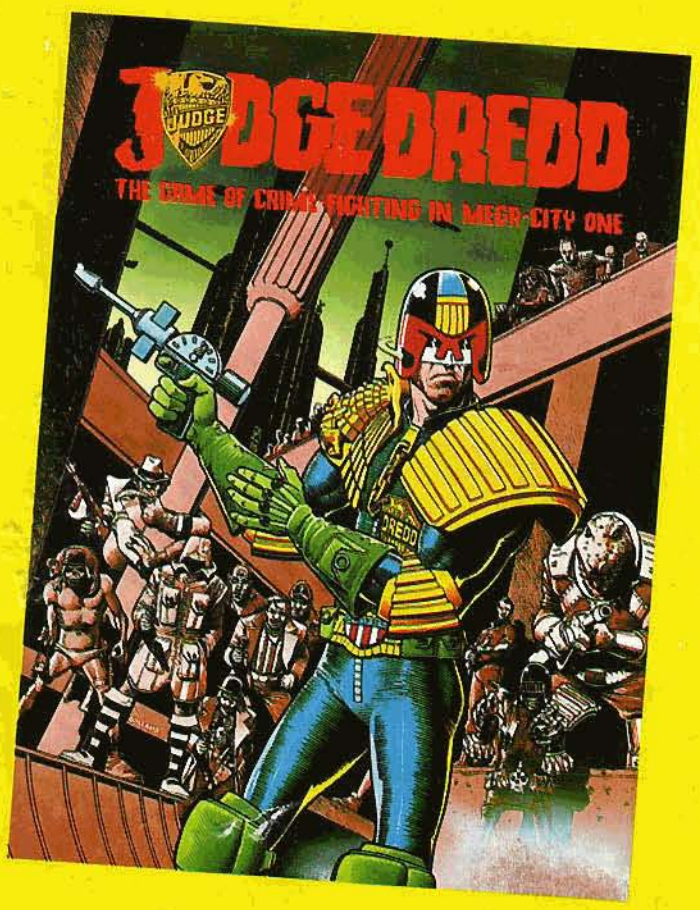

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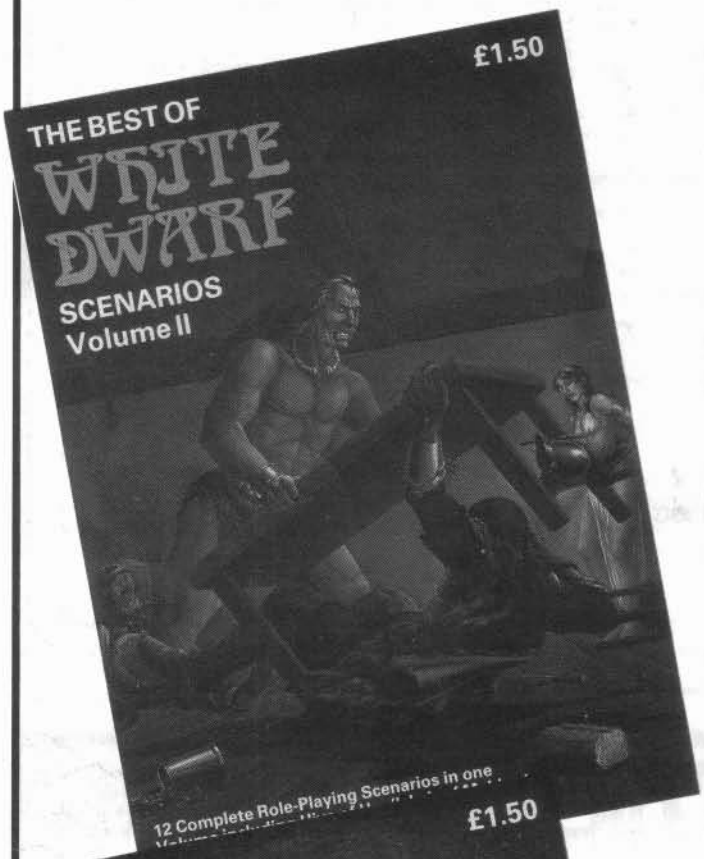

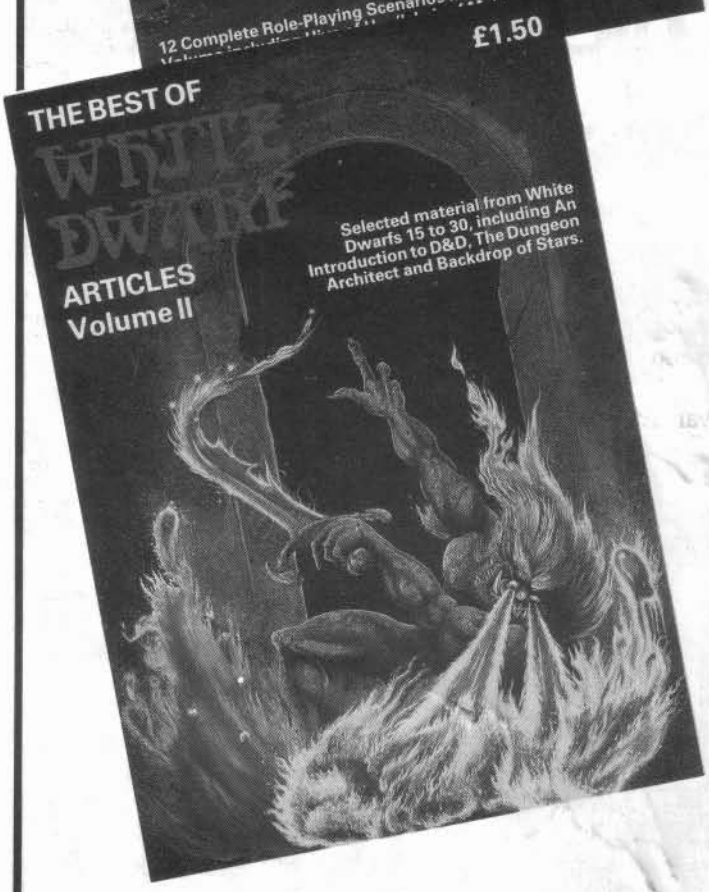

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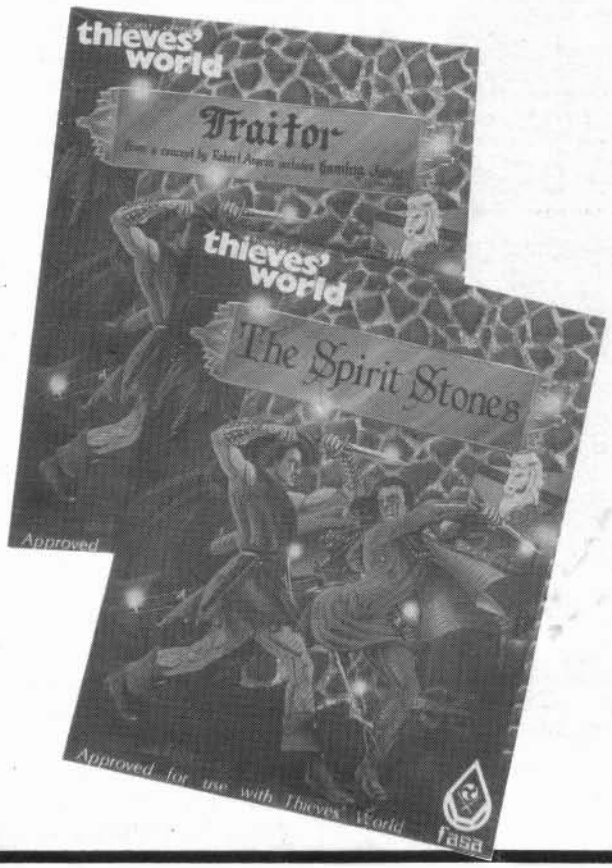

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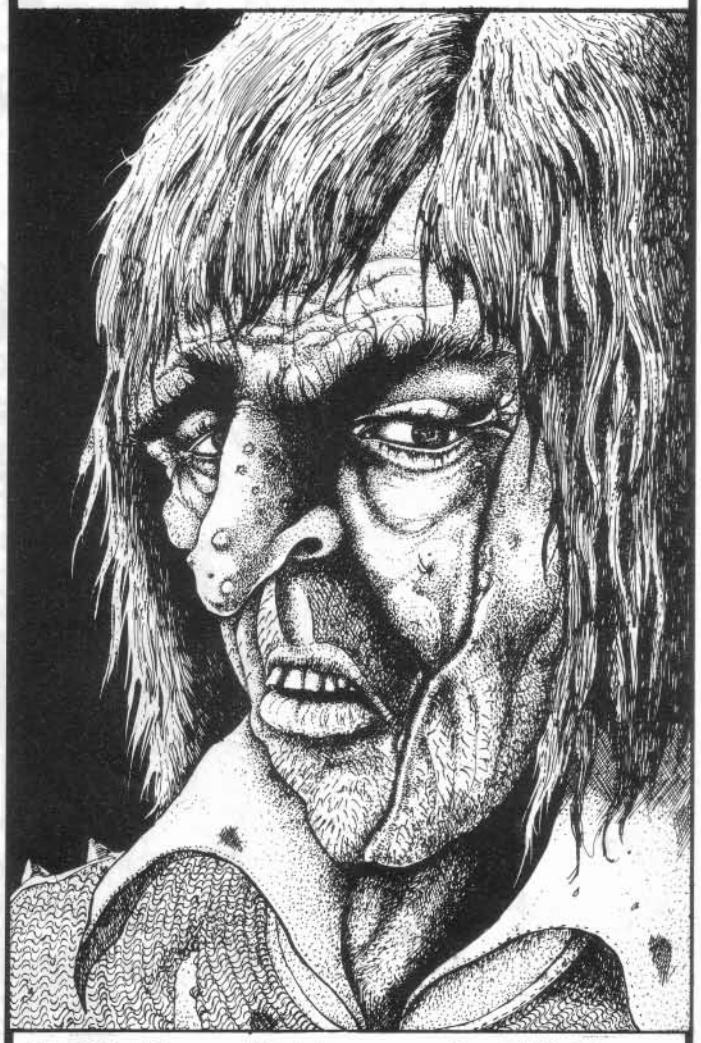

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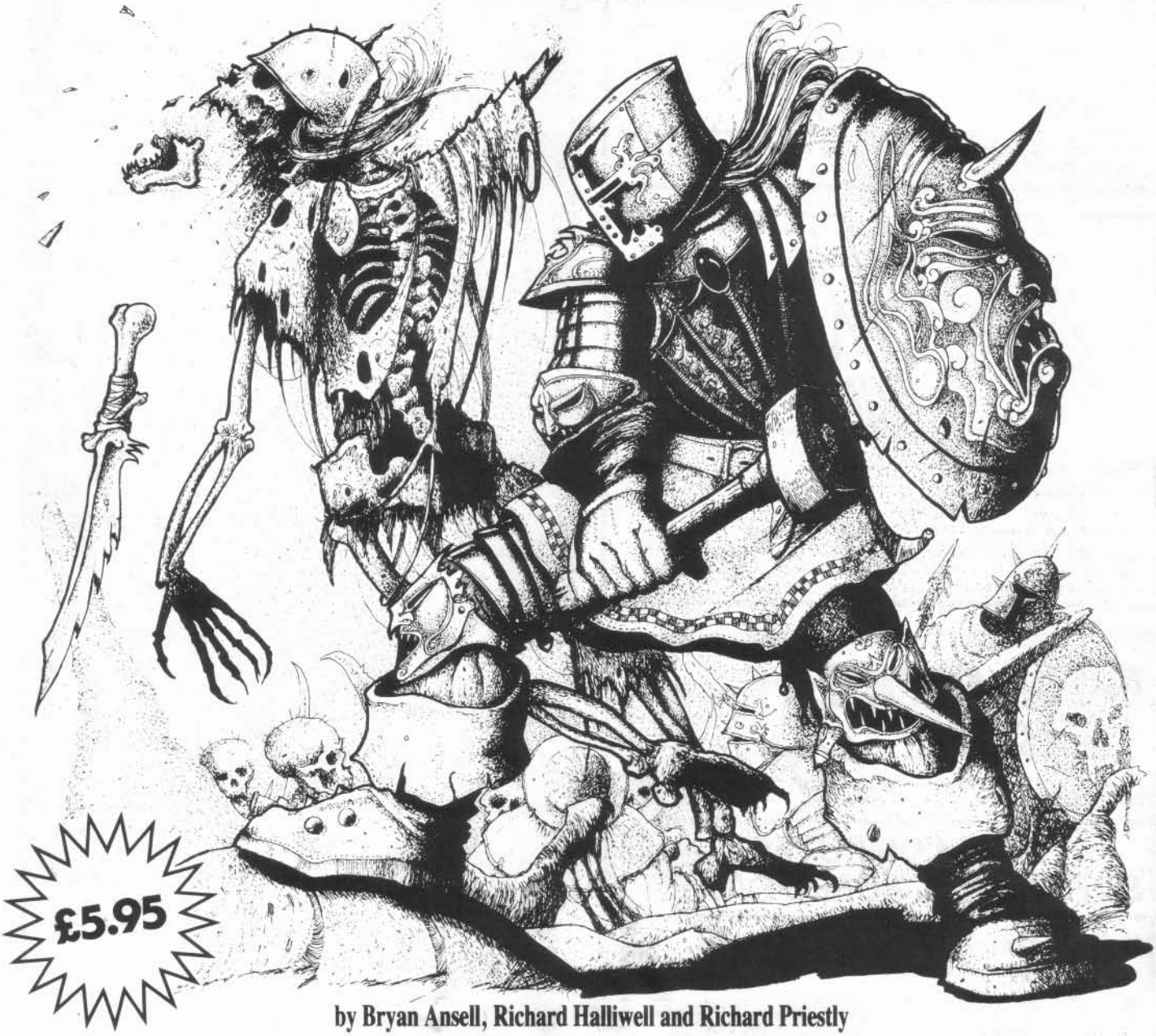

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A *Car Wars* Scenario

Following the recent surprise collapse of *SPI*, we now hear that *Heritage* have gone into liquidation. Rumour has it that other manufacturers are walking on shaky ground. The question is why? It seems clear that the great boom of the late seventies when new companies sprang up and consumers gobbled up everything in sight is now over. Nowadays people are becoming more selective in their purchases and poor games are no longer tolerated. The warning lights are flashing and any company which continues to expand, moving into larger premises, taking on more staff but continuing to churn out mediocre games had better look out.

Ian Livingstone

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BATTLEPLAN!

Non-human warrior codes for D&D for use with last issue's article The Dungeon Master General

by Alan E Paull

The Tactics of Dwarves

'Give me a year and a hundred of my kin and I would make this a place that armies would break upon like water'. Gimli at Helm's Deep.

Dwarves are by nature strong, resilient and tenacious. Their passion for gold and gemstones gives them excellent memories for the treasures of their past, and the defence or recovery of ancient dwarven riches is their main reason for going to war. Unfortunately these very riches inspire greed in others and continual aggression against dwarves has made them suspicious of other creatures. They are prickly about their rights and always prepared to fight for what they feel to be rightful dwarvish property.

Dwarves have an intimate knowledge of rock and how to use it. They are excellent engineers and expert builders of field fortifications and they are quite capable of creating concealed trenches, rockfalls and other hazards to trap the unwary. Dwarves will rarely fight outside the hilly or mountainous regions which provide them with such tremendous advantages.

Their armies, though smaller than the hordes of their evil enemies, are highly organised and well-equipped with weapons of superior manufacture. As individuals, dwarves are excellent fighters and their clerics provide invaluable support for them in battle. They do not normally hire spell casters of other types, because they prefer to rely on good dwarven steel. Their clan leaders, chosen by merit, are sufficiently trusted by their subordinates that dwarven armies will hold together in situations which would quickly scatter troops of other races. For example, if a party of dwarves were cut off from their main army, they would fight their way back to it regardless of casualties through vastly superior number of enemies; surrender would not occur to them. Human generals, used to the indiscipline and outright desertion of troops of their own race, are frequently astounded by the granite-hard morale of dwarven infantry. It has been said that dwarves know no fear in battle unless pitted against magical or supernatural foes, and even against these opponents dwarves are not as vulnerable as other humanoid races.

Table 1

Typical Dwarf Army

Troop type	*Regiment's Numerical Strength*	*No of Units*	*Unit Combat Strength*	*Regiment Combat Strength*	*Movement*
Infantry regiment; battle-axes and hammers	500	5	7	35	3
2 x Infantry regiments; spears	500 each	5	5	25	3
Infantry regiment; crossbows	500	5	3-4	15-20	4

Dwarven armies, though smaller than the hordes of their evil enemies, are highly organized and well equipped with weapons of superior manufacture.

Dwarven tactics are based firmly on their unshakable infantry. In a defensive position, which would invariably be entrenched if time allowed, the centre of the dwarven line would be occupied by a few ranks of spear-armed soldiers, while the flanks would be protected by dwarves wielding battle axes, hammers and, occasionally, short halberds. Narrow intervals would be left between the clan-sized companies to allow leather-armoured dwarves with crossbows to come forward should the enemy not deign to attack the position. Though sometimes as much as a quarter of a dwarven army may consist of dwarves with crossbows, they do not favour firing missiles, but prefer to get to close quarters, where their skill at hand-to-hand combat will pay off.

Dwarves place great trust in the solid earth beneath their feet. They hate being up in the air on horse back and will not ride into battle. The lack of a mounted arm makes dwarven armies less mobile and more formal in their tactics than others, but they are not often passive defenders in battle. In attack dwarves move swiftly, act together and take advantage of the terrain as much as possible. While dwarves with crossbows harry the enemy, the main body will advance, not in a phalanx of spears, but in a more open line, which gives individuals room to use axes, hammers and swords to the greatest effect. Dwarves

with polearms guard the flanks of the companies.

It is as difficult to resist the attacks of dwarven infantry as it is to defeat dwarven defences. They normally fight in only four or five ranks rather than the ten or more favoured by humans. Their individual strength, skill and mass prevents these thinner lines from breaking up during a melee, and the extra troops are used to outflank the enemy, to reinforce vulnerable spots, and to provide additional shock troops in attack. This ability to fight in shallower formations can cause an enemy to underestimate the power of a dwarven army. Few commanders will have the opportunity to make the same mistake twice.

Dwarven clans will always fight together in battle. Clan loyalty is very strong and often will override the considerations of their allies. Unfortunately this feeling can lead allies to think them fickle and untrustworthy. The dwarves just say 'the dwarves are for the dwarves' and go about their business.

The Tactics of Elves

As Elves have lifespans many times those of other races, their philosophy of life is radically different. In peace they have an abundant love of life, in war they have no fear of death. This attitude to life and death colours the way they fight.

Decades and even centuries of experience enable a high proportion of elves to develop considerable fighting skill. Though their expertise does not equal that of the very best of human fighters, the average elven soldier can outshoot and outfight the average human soldier. Where dwarven tactics stress organisation, elven tactics bring out the individual prowess of their warriors. Elves have an almost instinctive understanding of each other, which has emerged from scores of years of living closely together, but they do not bother with the trappings of a formal hierarchical command structure. Elves are closely attuned to nature and to living things in particular, which has helped them to develop superb horse-riding skills, even when riding bareback. Their intimate knowledge of terrain and their natural ability to conceal themselves, especially in woods, makes them excellent scouts. On their own ground whole elven armies might pass close by without their enemies' knowledge.

The elven race has a wide variety of troop types. Their infantry fight equally well with bow or with sword and buckler, changing weapons as the situation demands, and the accuracy of elven archers is legendary.

The elven race has a wide variety of troop types. Their infantry fight equally well with bow or with sword and buckler, changing weapons as the situation demands. The accuracy of elven archers is legendary, and they are even more deadly than the feared English longbowmen of the real world. Some elves use spears, but bows and longswords, which they manufacture for themselves, are favoured. Their individual skill and natural agility leads elves to disdain the wearing of heavy plate armour, preferring at most light mail and small shields. Most elven infantry would be classified as 'light infantry' by human observers, because they tend to fight in wider-spaced ranks and with less defensive armour than human soldiers. However, this classification is misleading, as it does not take into account the personal fighting ability of the elves, which makes them formidable opponents in hand-to-hand combat, both offensively and defensively, and, of course, as archers they are unparalleled.

Elves are the only race who, as a matter of course, would deploy magic-users on the battlefield. Most of these magic-users are also fighters or clerics or both, so they are less vulnerable than human magic-users, because they can wear armour and still cast spells. The extra power supplied by these magic-users compensates for the main disadvantage suffered by elves, which is their lack of numbers. Though an enemy force fighting elves might feel that it was surrounded and that there was an elf behind every tree, in reality it is much more likely that the elves would be few; they just fight inhumanly well.

Elves tend to take the long-term view of things and are less power-hungry and less materialistic than other races. They are always ready to retreat, if attacked, knowing that they can return at a later date. Elven tactics are fluid, making great use of feigned flights and surprise attacks. Hit and run raids are a favoured strategy, but elves are unpredictable. Sometimes a raid will turn into a full-scale confrontation. Forests provide elves with the opportunity to conceal themselves from any invader for a few days and then to wipe them out by an overwhelming attack from all sides. In more open terrain elves commonly use light cavalry, shooting arrows from horseback rather than indulging in the grand cavalry charges of human horsemen. However, as elves are excellent horse-riders, they can have it both ways and are quite prepared to melee if it is to their advantage.

Table 2

Typical Elf Army

Troop type	*Regiment's Numerical Strength*	*No of Units*	*Unit Combat Rating*	*Regiment Combat Rating*	*Movement Rating*
2 x cavalry 'regiments'	500 each	10	8-2	80-20	6
Infantry 'regiment', longswords	1000	5	5	25	4
Infantry 'regiment', bows and longswords	1000	10		20-60	5

Kobolds at War

Ancient saying: Where do kobolds live? In barracks.

Early in their evolution kobolds learned that in fair fights with other humanoids the little guys end up the losers. Their evil nature and aggressive instincts were not blunted by this setback, and they quickly found the solution to the problem: don't fight fair. A mistaken sense of racial superiority leads kobolds to hate all other intelligent life forms, and the feeling is entirely mutual. This koboldish inability to get along with other races combines with their small size to give the kobold military an appearance of weakness. Unfortunately for their neighbours, kobolds also have twin strengths to counteract this apparent inferiority. Forced to co-operate with each other, they have developed the best organisation of any of the evil races, and in addition they are skilled in the breeding and training of dangerous animals, who will then do a lot of their fighting for them.

Kobold tribes have a strong hierarchy which provides leadership in battle. As kobolds consider themselves to be perpetually at war, the whole of kobold social organisation is given over to providing for war and every kobold is first and foremost a fighter. If there exists a convenient non-kobold enemy, kobolds will refrain from in-fighting amongst

themselves and will strictly obey their commanders. However, after a battle the long knives will settle the scores and the new hierarchy will be chosen. Unfortunately, this process means that kobolds leaders are often inexperienced, and only a very few will have the opportunity of a long career as an officer.

Kobold armies are divided into squads, companies and war bands, with officers (with 3 or even 4 hit points!) leading each unit. It is not uncommon for a number of kobold armies to combine to form a group several thousands strong. As kobolds do tend to lose battles in all but the most favourable circumstances, morale tends to be brittle, so in an attempt to convince the troops of their might, kobold chiefs give their units large and extravagant numerical designations, for example, 'the 138th Southern Army' or '63rd Company, Eastern Command.'

Goblins may train wolves for battle, but koboldish skill far outstrips the efforts of goblins. Kobolds commonly breed and train wild boars as defensive guards for their lairs, and giant weasels as war-animals. A line of giant weasels leaping and bounding to the attack is a very unnerving experience for any soldier, but this beast is only one of many types of war-animal used by kobolds,

Kobold tribes have a strong hierarchy which provides leadership in battle. As kobolds consider themselves to be perpetually at war, the whole of kobold social organization is given over to war; every kobold is first and foremost a fighter.

though admittedly one of the most successful. Crocodiles and lizards of all sizes are also trained for battle, both for carrying kobolds as a form of slow cavalry, and for straightforward steamroller tactics on their own. Giant insects find favour amongst some war bands, but these tend to be difficult to control and a wise kobold chief will play this card last. Finally, there are legends which tell of a kobold air corps, containing those few beastmasters skilful enough to train and fly pterodactyls.

Koboldish battle tactics naturally play to their strengths. As they do not fight well in daylight or against a numerous foe, they prefer surprise night attacks on enemy detachments. Kobolds have skilful scout units whose job it is to report on the whereabouts of weaker enemies. On the other hand, they are not afraid of fighting full-scale, pitched battles, in which they will invariably attack rather than defend, throwing waves of club-wielding infantry at enemy position and supporting them with strong contingents of massed javelin-throwers. After a short 'softening up' period, the war-animals and the best fighting units armed with axes and spears will advance rapidly to exploit any weakening of the enemy line. The animals are sometimes held back as a 'secret weapon', and are usually rather more effective than their masters.

Table 3

Typical Kobold Army

	Regiment's Numerical Strength	*No of Units*	*Unit Combat Rating*	*Regiment Combat Rating*	*Movement Rating*
3 x Warbands; clubs	2000 each	5	3	15	3
Warband; javelins	1000	6		6-18	3
Warband; axes & spears	2000	5	4	20	3
Warband; giant weasels	300 weasels + 600 kobolds	10	5	50	3 (5 charge)
Warband; giant lizards	100 lizards + 300 kobolds	5	4	20	4
Company; scouts	100	1	1	1	4

The Tactics of Orcs

Orcs dislike working and enjoy fighting. They do not much care who the enemy is, but the weaker the better, for an easy victory results in the taking of many slaves. An abundant supply of slaves allows orcs the time to get on with one of their favourite pastimes, namely squabbling with other orcs. Stronger rivals, such as ogres, or local humanoid tribes more numerous than the orcs, may find orcs co-operative, but orcs will double-cross their 'allies' as a matter of instinct, unless led by a powerful, non-orcish leader, such as an evil wizard or cleric.

Compared with humans, orcs are individually strong and tough. They have a lot of stamina, so they can march fast and far. With a bit more training and considerably more care for their weapons and armour, orcs could become quite respectable fighters (from a military, not social point of view). Fortunately for their enemies, orcs are slothful, unless forced to improve their ways by somebody large with a long whip. Their tribal organisation is typical of a lawful evil social order with the stronger individuals forcing the weaker to obey. The order of superiority amongst rival tribes is worked out in similar bloody fashion, with the chief of the top tribe in a group commanding all the tribes.

Though some orcs are brave, they are usually cowardly like most bullies, so morale is a problem. Strong leadership helps, though disciplinary measures are of the crudest sort. Orcs will fight well if they are well-led and the troops are kept on a tight rein, but their formations will quickly disintegrate if their leaders make mistakes or fail to control the persistently active rebellious elements. All orcish chiefs and sub-chiefs have bodyguards to help them enforce their decisions, but revolts among the bodyguards are common. So, although some chiefs have sufficient prestige and reputation to lead from the back, most will have to do some fighting to prevent their troops from selecting a new leader, with fatal consequences for the previous one.

Orcs always fight on foot, as they are too cruel to living things to have any desire to ride horses. The chiefs of well-organised tribes, which are quite rare, will sort out their troops so that those with similar weapons will fight alongside each other and gain some advantage from uniformity. Units of orcs with spears, or polearms or axes would be formed, and even, occasionally, skirmishing units with crossbows. Lines are usually deep, as a protection against cavalry charges and so that losses can be quickly replaced from rear ranks.

Orcish tribal organization is typical of a lawful evil social order with the stronger individuals forcing the weaker to obey. The order of superiority amongst rival tribes is worked out in a similar fashion, with the chief of the top tribe in a group commanding all the tribes.

Orcs are not subtle in their tactics, unless led by non-orcs. Lacking mounted troops, they manoeuvre slowly and rely on strength more than skill. If attacked by superior forces they will adopt square formations to cover their flanks and rear. Their chiefs are fond of outflanking manoeuvres, even when such efforts are predictable, and frontal assaults are common, because it is so difficult to train the troops to perform more intricate manoeuvres, and also because at least orcs can be relied upon to attack. Orcs are clever miners, if they can be persuaded to work, and in defensive positions they will dig in if at all possible. Orc settlements are always fortified. In addition, orc armies will build ballistas to support their troops.□

Table 4

Typical Orc Army

	Regiment's Numerical Strength	*No of Units*	*Unit's Combat Rating*	*Regiment's Combat Rating*	*Movement Rating*
Infantry; mixed weapons	1200	6	4	24	4
Infantry; mixed weapons	1400	7	4	28	4
Infantry; mixed weapons	1000	5	4	20	4
Infantry; spears	800	4	5	20	4
Infantry; halberds	600	3	6	18	4
Skirmishers; crossbows	500	5	2-4	10-20	4
Ballistas	10+50 orcs	1	1-10	1-10	1

Critical Mass is a regular column reviewing sf and fantasy books, edited by Dave Langford. This issue...

The SF Awards

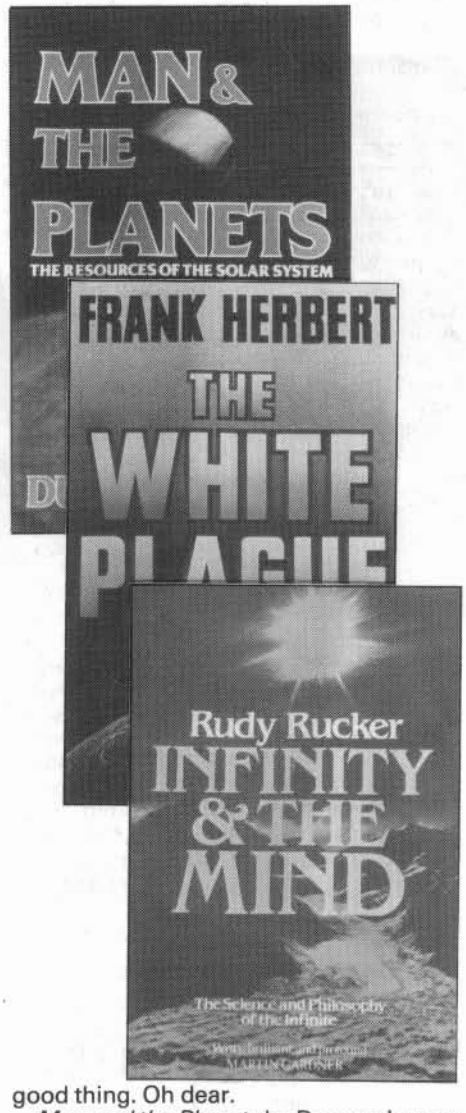
The time for SF awards is coming around again. The British SF Association award is for stuff published here in 1982, and the novel finalists are *Helliconia Spring* by Brian Aldiss (*Cape*), *No Enemy But Time* by Michael Bishop (*Gollancz*), *Little, Big* by John Crowley (*Gollancz*), *The Divine Invasion* by Philip Dick (*Corgi*) and *The Sword of the Lictor* by Gene Wolfe (*Sidgwick & Jackson, Arrow*). All are fine books; my first-place vote went to *Little, Big* if anyone's interested. Incidentally, those wanting information on the BSFA need only write to 18 Gordon Terrace, Blantyre, G72 9NA, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

The Nebula awards are for works first published in the USA during 1982, the voters being the SF Writers of America – filthy professionals who've published lots and paid lots of membership fees. Finalists: *Helliconia Spring, Foundation's Edge* by Isaac Asimov (*Granada*), *No Enemy But Time, The Transmigration of Timothy Archer* by Philip Dick (*Gollancz*), *Friday* by Robert Heinlein (*NEL*) and *The Sword of the Lictor*. The Asimov and Heinlein aren't such fine books; the Dick is excellent but not SF; my UK-chauvinist vote went to Aldiss, who's just delivered the sequel *Helliconia Summer* for publication in – you guessed it – Autumn.

Fattest book to hand is Frank Herbert's *The White Plague* (*Gollancz* 445pp £8.95), a remarkably effective version of that good old SF theme the world-ravaging epidemic. Scientist O'Neill's family is killed in an IRA outrage; he vows to do to the murderers what they did to him, and take away their wives. Being a molecular biologist working at genetic engineering, he's the first SF supervillain to be credibly capable of doing the dirty deed. Chemicals and processes are relatively cheap (Herbert argues powerfully) once the genetic knowledge is loose in the world; in no time he's brewed in the bathtub a fiendish disease which is 100% fatal to women, *only* women. Loosed in Ireland, the infection is out of control over half the world before anyone quite believes what's going on...

There's plenty of edge-of-the-seat suspense and good thumping melodrama in the race to crack the gene-structure of the plague while a few women are still left alive. Herbert leaps about from character to character, giving dozens of viewpoints on disaster, like a horrific kaleidoscope. And O'Neill the 'Madman' wanders Ireland, no crude baddie but a near-sympathetic schizoid whose mind has blotted out the memory of his crimes – while Herbert bravely and compassionately tackles the old issue of Irish fanaticism as mirrored in O'Neill. So far, so good.

When the book's over, though, there are pangs of doubt. The crackling tension almost stops you noticing there's only one female viewpoint in a cast of thousands; the relief when the plague is licked fails to cover a lack of credibility when this scatterbrain cheerfully accepts that from now on she and the other 0.01% of surviving women are going to be multi-husbanded baby factories and bye-bye to silly old ideas like feminism. There's even a suggestion that, because O'Neill's genetic breakthroughs are the key to immortality and a perfect complexion, the White Plague was really, on the whole, a pretty good thing. Oh dear.



Man and the Planets by Duncan Lunan (*Ashgrove Press* 306pp £9.50) is the nonfiction book for gamers who want credible space scenarios. It analyzes the Solar System's resources planet by planet, plugging the benefits of space colonization and human expansion to the planets and beyond. Want to know why it might be worth visiting Mercury (enormous energy flux from the Sun means free power for future history on Mercury) or Jupiter (Helium-3 'mined' from its atmosphere is a likely nuclear fuel for starships)? Lunan's enthusiasm is infectious, his research exhaustive; he's absolutely committed to the Dream of Space and has no time for the many equally learned people who fear that the expense of opening up this new frontier would wreck our world economy long before producing tangible benefits. Read it and decide for yourself while pinching countless ideas for *Traveller* universes.

A few American books to look for in the import shops. *Aurelia* by R A Lafferty (*Starblaze* 185pp $5.95) has what sounds like a simple story, hardly a story at all: 14-year old Aurelia is from a world which routinely sends out schoolkids to do fieldwork in World Government by ruling an unknown planet awhile. She lands on Earth (or is it?), causes huge controversy, goes on a three-day walkabout making speeches, and comes to a prophesied sticky end. Only this is Lafferty, pushing 70 but still a bizarre and original author who's an acquired taste, and the book bulges with jokes and philosophy (hard to spot which is which), tall tales and weird people: horned men, sinister yo-yos, doppelgangers, the extra prime number between 5 and 7, and a worm with a gun. Indescribable. I loved it.

People who like *Star Trek* immensely will no doubt enjoy Bjo Trimble's book of anecdotes and trivia, *On The Good Ship Enterprise* (*Starblaze* 286pp $5.95). It's *uncensored* and *unauthorised*, the cover boasts, but you could have fooled me. Certainly there are references to Kirk-Spocking (which is what naughty fans imagine the Captain and First Officer getting up to in their spare time) and how Harlan Ellison says uncensored things like – I quote – '@#$%©&**', but the book froths with too much uncritical enthusiasm and too much exclamation marks for comfortable reading.

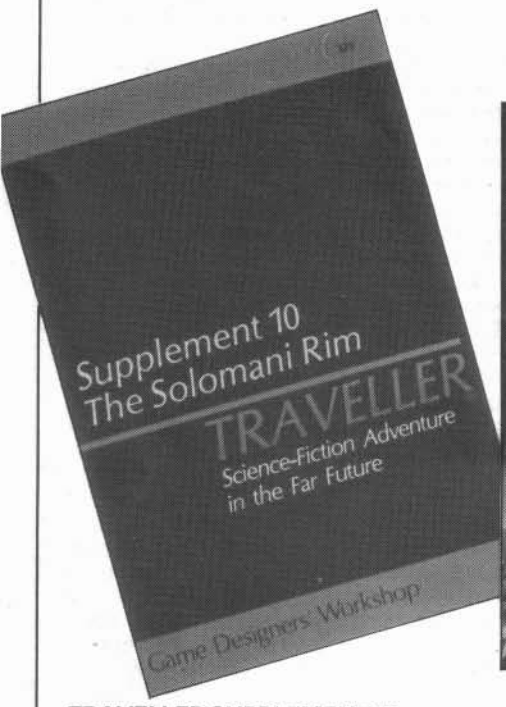
Finally, let me recommend one newish American author, Rudy Rucker. If you're lucky you may find a remaindered *Virgin Books* edition of his *White Light*; if not, grab the *Ace* paperback of this remarkable mathematical SF novel. It does the sort of things with infinite set theory which *Through The Looking Glass* did with chess. Another odd Rucker book is *Software* (*Ace* 212pp $2.25), about what it's like to *become* a robot operated by the software of your own personality-program, which program is stored in a computer disguised for excellent plot reasons as a Mr Frostee ice-cream van, leading to such dialogue as: *'I think you should kill him and eat his brain,' Mr Frostie said quickly. 'That's not the answer to every problem in interpersonal relations, Cobb said...'* Lastly, Rucker is a real-life mathematician specializing in infinity and has published a nonfiction work whose knobbly ideas and boggling paradoxes should stimulate the more numerate GMs into devising fiendish new riddles and traps. The title is *Infinity and the Mind* (*Harvester Press* 342pp £12.95), a must for anyone who enjoyed Hofstadter's *Godel, Escher, Bach* or the works of Martin Gardner. (Speaking of Gardner leads me to plug his *Science Good Bad and Bogus*, just out in paperback from *Oxford University Press* at £4.95 – putting the boot into numerous pseudoscientists, the great spoon-bending nonsense, and more.)

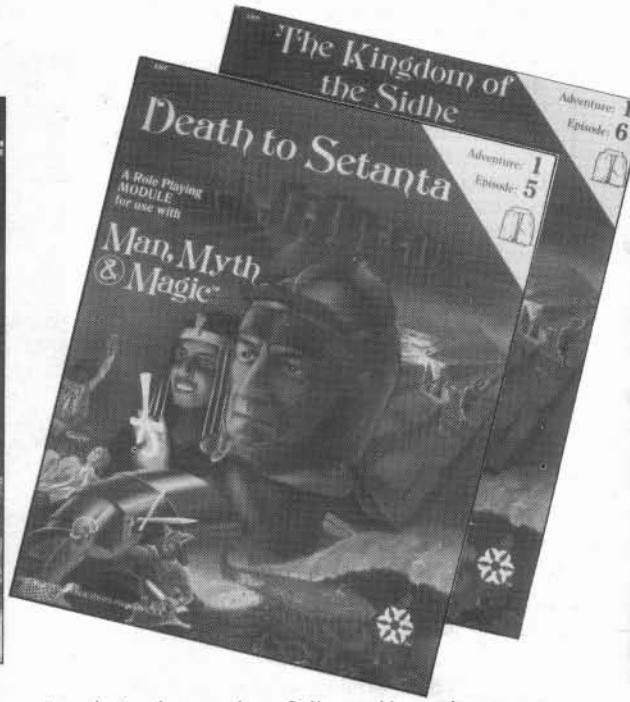
I have room for a spare sentence here: being interested in feedback, I'd appreciate letters c/o *White Dwarf* about the content of this page. Would you like to see more or less on books/awards/fiction/nonfiction/rude gossip about easily embarrassed SF authors? Let me know. Requests for 'much less Langford' may not be treated with entire sympathy.

Next month, the BSFA and Nebula award winners! Oh, the nerve-racking suspense, I can hardly wait (he said, falling asleep over the typewriter).□

In Open Box, *science fiction and fantasy games and rulebooks currently in the shops are reviewed by independent authorities.*

Solomani Rim Chartered





TRAVELLER SUPPLEMENT 10:
The Solomani Rim **£2.95**
GDW

The Solomani Rim is a kind of souped-up *Spinward Marches*; it is a pregenerated campaign background and map for a *Traveller* campaign, comprising 16 subsectors - each delineated in the standard *Traveller* format, with a double-page spread devoted to each subsector, comprising a subsector map and statistics for each planet thereon, together with a short descriptive paragraph - some explanatory material, an essay on the history of the region, an index, and an overall map of the subsector.

Hindsight is always 20/20 - but this is how *Spinward Marches* should have been done. The descriptive material gives one a background which will easily generate adventures, and details of a humanoid race to leaven the usual homogeneous mixture of humans. The centre pages are given over to a reduced-scale map of the sector - superior to the pull-out map of the *Paranoia Press* sectors, and a concept I first saw in a now-aborted *Games Workshop* project. This makes it much easier to relate the subsectors to each other, and so regulate travel between them. The subsector maps themselves have the much-improved symbology of *Twilight's Peak*, whereby bases and travel zones can be read directly from the map. Population levels are now roughly indicated by typeface size, with extremely high levels denoted by large capital letters - a further refinement.

Part of the map is a distorted form of the old Imperium board, and there are also occasional mentions of real stars such as Sirius.

For those without the time or inclination to design their own campaign background, this is the best pregenerated background currently on the market; it is already supported, further, with several adventures - *Marooned/Marooned Alone*, and *Argon Gambit/Death Station* for example. Though I must say, I don't feel it has broken any new ground; and as *GDW* have said themselves, there are already enough subsector maps around.

Overall:	**Novice**	**Expert**
	9	**2**

Andy Slack

MAN, MYTH & MAGIC **£14.95**
Adventure 1, Episode 5
- Death to Setanta **£3.95**
Adventure 1, Episode 6
- The Kingdom of the Sidhe **£3.95**
Yaquinto

Man, Myth & Magic is a loosely historical role playing game set in the ancient world, especially in and around the Roman Empire, in the first century A.D.. The boxed set consists of basic and advanced rules, a scenario book holding one basic adventure and the first four parts of adventure 1, a pad of character sheets, two miniscule percentile dice, and a folded sheet of maps and plans. The two rule books and the scenarios total 116 pages including several more maps.

The 24-page basic rules are supposed to be learned by experience, in a gradual process of character generation, training, and fairly simplistic adventuring. While this might seem a good way to learn the game, in practice it means that much more text must be read to find each new rule or modifier of existing rules. For example, pages 4 and 5 of the first book cover basic character generation and eight simplistic unarmed combat rules, and are followed by a six page episode in which the player characters cross part of Rome to find the Gallicus, a gladiator training school (all basic characters are trainee gladiators). By carefully reading this section it is just possible to extract rules (for a simple gambling game and arm wrestling), from the surrounding descriptions of buildings and their occupants. Unfortunately, to find this vital information it is first necessary to read a half page 'atmospheric' description of the area and a dramatic commentary on a typical arm wrestling match, the result being predetermined by the characteristics of the opponents - there is no chance of a lucky dice roll to overcome a stronger opponent. These turgid passages illustrate this games fatal flaw, the fact that its authors are so determined to be entertaining that they waste the referees time with inane and almost certainly annoying jokes and comments, lengthy descriptions of fairly simple objects or places, and silly names for NPCs. Experienced players and referees will probably use the basic rules for about half an hour before moving onto the advanced section.

Book 2, at 40 pages, is more coherently organised and covers a more complex character generation, combat, and magic system which incidentally supersedes or modifies virtually every point covered in the basic rules. Player characters are randomly produced from several possible races and professions, by a process called 'reincarnation' which the character must undergo at the end of each adventure. Characteristics are retained but may be modified by the new form or profession. This rule is probably the reason that a full pad of character sheets is provided, since virtually every facet of a character may be changed by each reincarnation and must be rewritten, all mag-

ical equipment and money is lost, and the character is born anew with a randomly generated inheritance which may include money, magic or other useful items.

The combat system used is reminiscent of that in *RuneQuest*, although greatly simplified, with armour protecting specific areas and capable of absorbing a proportion of each blow, and characters able to attempt to hit any desired part of the body. The type of weapon used modifies damage but not strike probability, and it is assumed that any character of a given race and profession can automatically use weapons of one or more specified types. As characters progress they gain skill which is applied to all weapons used. A surprising omission from this section is the lack of any rule regarding the possibility of infection following wounding, and it is possible for combats to continue for many turns before characters die. However, the rules do allow for permanent injury if the damage to any given part of the body exceeds an arbitrary maximum.

As well as affecting combat, race and profession determine the characters abilities to learn spells or use magical artifacts, and add a Prime ability which may be combat, skill in potion manufacture, predicting the future, or a knack of making money. Secondary abilities and psychic powers may also be added, and possibly one or more disadvantages.

The magic system works by strangely familiar POWER points, and includes a few extremely silly spells - one which all magic-using characters can cast makes any gold within 50 yards mumble 'Here I am', while Leprechauns have a spell allowing them to turn any willing person into a Shamrock. I suspect that this ability is used extremely rarely. Most of the spells are reminiscent of those in *AD&D*, a game which is somehow never mentioned in the potted history of fantasy role playing at the start of the basic rules.

The 'adventures' book included with the boxed set contains an extremely simple basic scenario in which characters must kill Livia the Poisoner, who lives near the Gallicus, and four episodes of the first *Man, Myth & Magic* adventure. Episode 1 sends characters dragon hunting, and is supposed to introduce players to the difference between the games setting and historical reality. This scenario runs to four pages and could be reasonably entertaining with sufficiently ingenious players, even more so if they tended towards stupidity.

In episode 2 Caligula 'hires' the players to find out the true nature of a 'Temple of Apollo' (which is known as Stonehenge), and investigate the strange phenomena which have been seen in Britain in the past few months. There are a few encounters en route plus a set-piece battle at Stonehenge itself, before the true nature of the site is revealed and the players are introduced to the next stage of the adventure. Episode 3 takes the adventurers to Hibernia (alias Ireland) for some fairly routine dungeon bashing, then on to Egypt for Part 4 in which they discover the secret of the Great Pyramid, and in a cliffhanging ending unleash a chain of events leading into the separately published scenarios. The book also holds some reasonably obvious notes on refereeing methods.

Adventure 1, episode 5, is a 24 page booklet containing a brief introduction and another dungeon, this time of the 'Halls of Testing' variety. It is essentially an initiation to allow the players entry to the world of the Sidhe, magical beings of Hibernia, and does not solve many of the adventures mysteries. There are several major anachronisms which cannot be described without revealing details of the module. It is almos impossible to run the rest of the adventure without information in this module.

Episode 6 continues the adventure, and is mostly set in the world of the Sidhe. A few of the story's enigmas are resolved but the ending is yet another crisis for the players. This was the most enjoyable scenario of those I saw.

By now it is probably apparent that I did not like *Man, Myth & Magic*. The rules are too derivative, simplistic and ambiguous, and do not give a realistic feeling of the ancient world, and the adventures allow the players too little free will, although the detailed explanations and descriptions may help novice referees. If the authors had focussed their attention on a more accurate simulation, or on a more coherent system, my opinion might be different. As it stands, I doubt that I will play this game very frequently.

Positive points are reasonably good presentation, with each book and scenario having an identical glossy cover illustration, the large pad of character sheets, and some useful maps which might be adaptable for other systems. The dice, though small, seem well made and accurate.

	Set	Episode 5	Episode 6
Playability	5	5	6
Enjoyment	5	4	6
Skill	4	6	7
Complexity	5	4	6
Overall	5	4	6

Marcus L Rowland

STAR EXPLORER
Fantasy Games Unlimited **£9.95**

Fantasy Games Unlimited boldly proclaims that players can now 'adventure on the final frontier' by playing *Star Explorer*. The scene is set, and players going where no man has gone before will find unending opportunities for comments such as 'the engines will nae stand it, Captain.' Corny it may be, but this game is well-constructed and immensely playable.

Before play commences, the Star Explorers design their starships. Components are engines, teleporters, shields, missiles, beams, armour, energy and crew teams. A given number of each component must be included in any ship, so players are really selecting options, which will allow a more effective response to some of the events during play. For instance, if a player wants to fight enemy starships, he or she will opt for more weaponry, shields and armour. As the number of optional extras is limited, players have to decide which type of events to favour. Our captain in the above example would probably have fewer crew teams for planetary exploration than a captain who decided to run for it if he met enemy ships.

The players' objective is to explore the handful of randomly placed planets on the stellar map within a time limit of twenty turns. Each player is pitted against the game system rather than the other players, and the one who returns to Starbase with the most victory points wins. The system is excellent for solitaire play, and an optional rule allows captains to gain 'experience' in the form of die roll modifiers.

Play is divided into two sections: interstellar movement and planetary exploration. While sailing between the stars, ships may encounter asteroid belts, dust clouds, radiation storms and other hazards, or other starships, namely traders, who buy and sell ship components and crew teams in exchange for energy, enemy vessels, who might be persuaded to agree to a local truce, and pirates, who will not agree to a truce.

At each planet all the starships beam down crew teams and resolve three planetary encouters, scoring victory points for every success. In addition, captains worried about their energy stores can send the men out fuel prospecting. Planetary environments range from aquatic to desert, from radiated to glaciated. Types of encounter are many and varied, including man-eating plants, rich mineral deposits, psionic superbeings, rare diseases and planetary disasters, such as avalanches, droughts and for the very unfortunate, orbiting enemy dreadnoughts.

Star Explorer is not a game for those who dislike dice, because all these encounters are resolved by consulting tables and rolling dice (six-sided and twenty-sided). However, the procedure is swift and mostly painless for the players, if not for the crew teams. Each type of encounter has its own specialist teams, botanists for plant encounters, geologists for mineral finds, sentient contact teams for intelligent life forms and so on, while the more numerous military teams can have a crack at anything. Specialist teams gain die roll modifiers, but the military do not, and the latter are also the obvious target for the various carnivores, aggressive sentients, volcanic eruptions and so on. As always, security teams are expendable.

The game is very well balanced. It is not possible to win just be selecting one or two particular encounter types and betting everything on them. Though chance is an integral part of virtually every aspect of the game, there is ample opportunity for players to twist Dame Fortune's arm. No game of *Star Explorer* will be decided by a couple of lucky dice rolls, because good luck in one part of the game is usually cancelled out by bad luck in another. The only major flaw in this game is the rather unimaginative artwork, which unfortunately does detract slightly from the quality of the product. Above all, the game plays smoothly and swiftly and rarely gets bogged down in inactivity. You've watched the television series, you've seen the movies, now play the game!

Rules:	**9**	**Enjoyment:**	**9**
Playability:	**10**	**Complexity:**	**5**
Skill:	**7**	**Overall:**	**9**

Alan E Paull

A TASTY MORSEL

by Oliver Dickinson

A tale of Griselda's exploits in Pavis, Glorantha.

Did you ever hear the one about how Griselda was captured by Dark Trolls and how she got out of it? Read on and discover the awful truth!

Personally, I always consider it smart to take a good look around you, or be facing the door, when you are speaking of someone else, in case that someone else may appear unexpectedly and take exception to what you are saying. Which is what this blowhard who is holding forth on Trolls in Loud Lilina's neglects to do, for he is leaning back in a chair, so that his topknot hangs over the edge, and he is by no means looking at the door, but at us, to see how impressed we are. For, to hear him tell it, he knows more about Trolls, or Uz as he calls them, than they do. He is a big guy and he is clearly very proud of his topknot, which he is always running a hand over; I judge he may be from the Llamà Riders originally, since they favour long topknots. Anyway, he takes to speaking of real high shots among the Trolls that he knows of, and he mentions Pikat Yaraboom, and someone else says that Griselda knows him. He asks who is this Griselda, and when we describe her he laughs very loud.

'A red-head' he cries. 'Why, the only use Pikat Yaraboom has for such is to eat them! It is my guess that this Griselda does not know him any more than she knows Zorak Zoran.'

Well, it is most unfortunate for the guy that Griselda is entering just then. She certainly moves fast, and before anyone can draw breath there is a whoosh and a snick, and she has her sword in one hand and his topknot in the other. She tosses it on the table in front of him and says, 'Mind your manners!' The guy goes all red and starts grabbing for his own sword, yelling, 'But it's true! He does eat them!'

'That much is true,' says Griselda, ducking under his swing and putting her sword-point to his throat, 'and that is why I do not kill you,' and she grins at him. There is no pleasantness in the grin, and the guy gives a kind of shudder, and drops back in his chair with all the fight gone out of him; he just says, sounding puzzled, 'Then how come he doesn't eat you?' Griselda contemplates him for a moment as she sheathes her sword, and says, 'Buy me a drink and I'll tell you.'

Well, the guy is at the counter spilling clacks all over the place as he pays for the drink, and someone else politely offers Griselda his seat, and we all gather round, for this promises to be such a story as is seldom heard in Lilina's. Even Lilina is there bending an ear, for this is a slack time of day for her. Griselda takes a good swallow of her drink and begins to speak.

'When I am younger,' she says, 'I am not dumb the way some dolls are, but I take risks. It is because I take risks that I wind up in the hands of Trolls, but I am better off than the guys I travel with, for I know something of Trolls. My father says to me and my brothers, "You need never meet Mostali if you don't go underground, or Aldryami if you stay out of their forests, or Dragonewts if you keep clear of their cities, but there are Trolls everywhere, so get to know something about them if you wish to improve your chances of survival." I figure he knows what he is speaking of, for he adventures quite some in his youth, so I pay him what I can afford to learn some Darktongue, and what he knows about Troll customs, for my old dad seldom does anything for nothing. And so, when the party I am with is jumped one night by Trolls, I know what to do. I huddle down to dodge the slingstones as best I can, and I take out this piece of meat which I carry for just this purpose, and I throw it out and call in Darktongue, "Come and eat, and let's talk!" This impresses the Trolls enough that they spare my life, and in fact they do not lay a finger on me, except that one touches my hair and says something to the others which I fail to catch. I am still a prisoner, with a rope round my neck, but this is better than being dead like the others. After the Trolls finish going through my camp, we head across country, and after they stop at a Troll village and leave a lot of stuff some take me on. I do plenty of walking in the next few days, and it is a good thing that the days are sunny and the Trolls take cover during the day, so that I get some rest, or I will probably croak. As it is, I am not in very good shape when we get wherever we are headed, but I will not let a Troll carry me, for I am determined to show that I am not weak the way they like to think humans are.

'I can tell that we are visiting some very important Troll from the way that those bringing me behave, so I keep bent as they do, and when I am brought into his presence I lie flat, as my father tells me to do, until I am told to get up. One of those bringing me makes a speech in which he offers me as a present, and while he does so I sneak a peek at Pikat Yaraboom, for this is who it is. He is surely unusual even for a Troll, for he has this great big left hand, and his eyes seem very odd and faraway, and when he smiles I can see that all his teeth

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are sharp. He seems quite pleased, and one of his aides addresses me in good Tradetalk and tells me that I am now belonging to him and will be well-treated if I behave myself. I thank him in my best Darktongue, and I can see that this goes down quite well with the Trolls. I stay with them for weeks and get to talking Darktongue much better and learn much more about Trolls, and all the while I do not have to do any work and am offered all I can eat of good human food, though of course none of it is hot as Trolls are very leery of fire. The Trollkin looking after me seem eager to press food on me and I find myself getting somewhat plump in places, so I start taking some exercise. For some reason this interests many of the Trolls no little, and they encourage me to show what I can do and even pit me against their tougher Trollkin, and since, though I say it myself, I am better than a raw hand at fighting and such even then, I do well and make quite an impression, and even Pikat Yaraboom comes to watch occasionally. In fact, the Trolls seem to treat me the way you will a cute puppy or even a smart-talking slave, and I know enough to play along with this.

'Naturally, I am not at all popular with the tougher Trollkin, in fact they give me plenty of the back of their necks, but the ordinary workers seem all pleased-up at my defeating the tougher ones, because these just naturally love to push the rest around. Any Troll will tell you that just about all Trollkin are dumb and useless, but I am here to say that plenty are not so dumb as they act, but they figure it best to appear that way, for Trolls are apt to kill Trollkin who act too smart. I get to know some Trollkin quite well, and will chat with them when they have the time, which is not often, and they treat me very friendly. Well, one day I happen to comment to one of my friends, and she looks at me a little strangely. "For now, yes," she says, "but you may prefer to be an Enlo* soon, for life is better than death. Even we know that."

'"You are saying I am to die?" I say, somewhat horrified. "What do I do wrong?"

'"Why, nothing," she says. "But it will be Dark Season soon, and that is when the great lord will have his special feast." "He will eat me?" I say. She rolls her eyes, and looks all around, and then almost in a whisper, "You mean they don't tell you? Why else do you suppose they feed you so well? The lord thinks you copperheads are extra good to eat. But never say I am the one to tell you or they will eat me, too, before my time," and off she goes in a great hurry.

'This gives me plenty to think about, all right, and for sure I am in a very tough spot. We are deep in Troll country, so that even if I can escape from the camp the chances of getting clear away are a zillion to one. The only plan I think of is to edge Pikat Yaraboom into guaranteeing my life some way, and I do plenty of studying on that theme, and stop taking exercise, and make as if I am going off my food. Naturally the Trollkin who are looking after me are greatly perturbed, though they do not try to force-feed me, and by and by the news must get to Pikat Yaraboom himself, for I am summoned to him. It is the first night of Dark Season, and all the Trolls are celebrating, but it is not his special feast yet. He asks through his aide why I am not eating, and I say that I am not feeling too good and may be sickening for something. They all seem alarmed, and he has his best Xiola Umbar* priestess look me over, but she states that as far as she can tell I am in good condition. So he has the best human food available brought, and I make like I am tempted to eat, and pretty soon I am acting cheerful, and they all seem relieved and the party takes off again. The Trolls are passing around big mugs of liquids of all kinds, and getting a charge from them by what I can see, and finally I ask to try one. This causes much merriment, and Pikat Yaraboom so far forgets himself as to speak to me direct. "Why, little copperhead," he says, "these drinks are fine for Trolls, but no human can take them!"

Finally he grates out, 'I can still chop off your legs, and maybe I will for cheating me of the rest of you.'

I play my last card and say, 'I don't mind losing a little bit here and there, but I hope that just this once you will be satisfied with an appetiser.'

'Here is my chance, so I say very clearly, in Darktongue, "I bet my life I can drink three and live through it."

'This causes quite a silence, and some of them look rather uncomfortable. Then the Xiola Umbar priestess says, "Give her the chance," and some others murmur approvingly. Pikat Yaraboom looks thoughtful, and finally he says to one of his aides, "Tell her she has a bet, but she cannot bet her life, or her freedom, or a trip out of here." Now this may seem a setback, but I am prepared for it, and say I will choose my prize later, if I win. This is a form of Troll contest, and the rules are that I get to choose a drink, and then someone else does, and finally he does; I must drink a good mug of each, and none can be beer, which they drink and is just like human beer, and I can use Healing or be Healed if I am knocked out, as long as I am still alive. I choose a drink which they seem to like: it is brown and thick, with lumps in it, and the smell reminds me very stongly of a pisshouse, but I get it down, though the first taste needs an effort, and nothing seems to happen. After this there is some discussion, and I figure they are not wised-up on how their drinks affect us. One of his aides gets to pick, and chooses a pretty liquid which is dark purple with blue bubbles. It tastes as good as it looks, but when I finish it is like a flaming dagger hits right through my vitals and I am knocked flat, which gets plenty of laughs. It takes me two goes of all the Healing I know to get me up again, and still my stomach is sending out regular distress signals, but I cannot afford to use up too much Power and let it go. I have to take my pants off, which gets more laughs, but I do not care as now I only have one to go.

'Pikat Yaraboom studies quite some before he picks it, and the Trolls seem to think he picks a lily. I have to say that it is the worst I ever see, for it looks and smells like what gets cleaned off the floor after a real eat-it-up and spew-it-out feast. I cannot help showing distaste, and the Trolls howl with laughter and start tossing around encouraging remarks like, "This one will do the trick," and "Are you sure you don't want to stop?" But I say to myself, it's now or never, and so I take a deep pull. This is not so rough as you will expect, and in five more swallows I finish the mug, though the last two especially take a bit of keeping down, and when I am done I am still standing. They all watch intently, but nothing seems to happen, and finally to break the silence I ask for some beer to take the taste away. Then most of them laugh like crazy, and some cheer, but Pikat Yaraboom is not laughing, and he fixes his odd eyes on me and asks what I want.

'I take a deep breath, for this is where I find out whether it is all worth it, and I say that I wish him to guarantee that I will keep the use of all my senses, no matter what. There is dead silence, and he keeps those odd eyes on me and opens his mouth a little, and it is all I can do to look back. He clearly realises that I know what will happen to me if I cannot save myself. Finally he grates out, "I can still chop off your legs, and maybe I will for cheating me of the rest of you." The Xiola Umbar priestess looks ready to butt in, so quickly I play my last card and say, "I don't mind losing a little bit here and there, but I hope that just this once you will be satisfied with an appetiser."

'There is silence while you can count six, and then he lets out the biggest bellow of laughter I ever hear, and slaps his thigh, and all the rest join in, even the priestess and the Trollkin who are present. Then he wipes his eyes, and says, still talking right to me, "Copperhead, it will be a crime to kill you off, when there are so many dummies who will do just as well. You shall have your wish, but tell me how you learn what I intend, and I will not touch a finger of you, I swear by my father's name!"'

At this point Griselda pauses to refresh herself, and she grins at us as we hang on her words. Finally, Lilina says, 'Well - do you do it?'

Griselda shakes her head. 'That is one thing I do that I am proud of; I refuse to tell. None of them understand this, not even the Trollkin, but I believe they honour me for it. Even Pikat Yaraboom may be impressed, for he takes very little advantage of my offer, and soon after he has me escorted back to human territory and passes the word that I am his friend.'

'What do you mean, takes advantage of your offer?' say the guy who once has a topknot.

Griselda smiles. 'It is nothing really; I am just shy a little padding here and there. It is all very carefully done; that Xiola Umbar priestess surely knows her stuff. He won't take any fingers or toes, because there is no meat on them. So you see, when he gives Javis Gan the word that I am a tasty morsel, he knows what he is talking about.'□

* Enlo is the native name for Trollkin; Xiola is a Troll goddess of Healing and compassion.

SORCEROUS SYMBOLS

by Phil Hine

Sigils – magical marks – can be used as useful variants on the more usual amulets and talismans.

Sigils are a special kind of magical rune, first developed by a Neutral sorceror-sage and passed on by him to his numerous disciples. They are a specialized form of picture-glyph, engraved on a silver plate, and worn like an amulet.

The power of Sigils lies in the vast, untapped resources of the subconscious mind. The particular form of a Sigil is attuned to a specific, wished-for desire. When the Sigil is consciously concentrated upon, energy is released from the user's subconscious, causing the effect the Sigil is created for.

Sigils can only be made by Neutral magic-users, as the necessary skills have been imparted from master to apprentice, only down this particular branch of MU's (includes NG and NE).

Proficiency to make the basic type of Sigil is gained at the 6th level. More complex Sigils can be made when the MU progresses to Lvl8, and later Lvl10. To be taught the necessary silver crafting and design skills the MU must have Int and Dex Prime requisites of 12 or greater. Those MUs who have received instruction in this arcane science, will also possess the spell *hypnotism* [see below].

Dr Arcos the Arcane: 'Go forth and slay me a cyclops. Bring to me its eye and I shall reward you with a Sigil of Strength. Deal?'
Munchskull Bloodaxe: 'Deal!'

Any character is potentially capable of using Sigils, providing they have a minimum Int of 10. There are, however, class restrictions. Paladins, for example, view sigils as devices of sorcery, and do not trust them. As for clerics, it depends on how individual DMs handle the relationship between cleric and deity. The more lawful deities may insist that their clerics should only gain powers from that deity and its supernatural agents alone, while Neutral and Chaotic deities may be less concerned about this.

A proficient MU can make Sigils, either for his or her own use or for the use of another specific person. This means that a Sigil can only be designed to work for one person only and if another attempted to use it, it simply wouldn't work for them. Thus Sigils cannot be 'found'. They must be obtained commercially or, as is more commonly the case, given as a reward for some service.

Construction
There are three types of Sigil:
a) Those that bring about a physical change to the user,
b) Those that bring about a magical effect upon the user,
c) Those that affect parties other than the user.

Construction Time
This is the number of days that the MU must spend devising and preparing the Sigil, before the final session [see below]

Minimum Level of Creator
This is the minimum experience level an MU must be to create a particular type of Sigil.

Minimum Int of User
This is the minimum Intelligence score a character must have to use the Sigil type.

Concentration Time
This is equivalent to casting time for spells. The user must concentrate intensely on the Sigil, visualing its form and not performing any other activity. This activates the Sigil to release its energy.

Final Session
After the MU has finished engraving the Sigil onto its silver plate, a final session must be held, where the future owner of the Sigil is present. The MU then proceeds to put the character into a *hypnotic trance*. No Saving Throw is made as the recipient of the plate is a willing subject. Sometimes the character might independently hire a witness, the vouchsafe that nothing of an underhand nature takes place. Once the character is in the trance, the MU 'suggests' that whenever the Sigil is concentrated upon, the desired result will manifest itself.

Example: A character who wishes to increase his physical strength when necessary, is put into a *hypnotic trance*. In

Type	*Construction Time*	*Min Lvl of Creator*	*Min Int of User*	*Concentration Time*
A	1d4+1 days	6	10	1 segment
B	1d4+2 days	8	12	2 segments
C	1d4+3 days	10	14	3 segments

that trance, he is given the suggestion that whenever he concentrates upon the Sigil he will become very strong, for a brief period. This suggestion lasts for some time, as whenever the Sigil is activated, the conviction is further impressed on the subconscious. By concentrating on the Sigil, the necessary subconscious energy is released.

If however, the MU is constructing a Sigil for his own use, the final session is different in that the MU *hypnotises* himself in front of a mirror, and is able to implant the Sigil's use into his own subconscious, coming out of the trance directly after the suggestion has been made.

Examples of Type A Sigils

Sigil of Fire Resistance
This Sigil, when activated, renders the user immune to the effects of normal fire and gives +2 on Saving Throws vs magical fire. If a save is made, no damage is sustained from magical fire attacks and if it fails, only half damage is taken.
Duration: Permanent.

Sigil of Healing
When activated, this Sigil allows its user to heal 2-7 hit points of damage on his or her body.
Duration: Permanent.

Sigil of Strength
A small Tiger's Eye gem must be set into the design of this Sigil. Its use increases the user's physical strength by 1-4 points (to a max of 18/50).
Duration: 1 round.

Sigil of Curing
This Sigil works in a fashion similar to the Lvl3 clerical spell, *cure disease*. It will *cure* completely any such afflictions within 1-6 days. The owner must use the Sigil once a day until the disease lessens gradually until at the end of a given period the disease has disappeared completely.

Examples of Type B Sigils

Sigil of Light
This Sigil produces an effect similar to the Lvl1 clerical spell, *light*, but only the user benefits - no other creature can see the light.
Duration: 1 round/level of creator.

Sigil of Alignment Sensing
When activated this Sigil enables the user to sense the alignment of any creature within 1" in front of him. *Confuse alignment* and similar devices foil the use of this Sigil.
Duration: 1 round.

Sigil of Protection
This Sigil causes a similar effect to the Lvl1 clerical spell *protection from evil*.
Duration: 1 round/level of character.

Examples of Type C Sigils

Sigil of Holding
When activated the Sigil enables the user to hold (as *hold person*) one humanoid creature immobile. After concentrating upon the Sigil, the user will be able, within the next turn, to deliver a verbal command ie 'Stay where you are', with such command and authority that the target must save vs spells at -2 or be effected for 1 round/level of Sigil's creator.

Sigil of Fear
When activated this Sigil causes its user to appear so fearful and terrible that all creatures below 6th level/HD must save vs spells or retreat from him (range: 2" circle). While the effects last the 'feared' creatures will not approach closer than 4" from the wielder of the Sigil and will not attack.
Duration: 1 round/level of creator.

Sigil Restrictions

A particular Sigil can be used only twice a day, and there must be a period of 6 hours between users. Those who attempt using Sigils outside of these strictures will find that the strain on the subconscious mind causes a blackout lasting 1-6 hours, followed by severe headaches for a further 1-4 hours. Similarly, a character may not possess more than 1 Sigil at any time, as attempting to use different Sigils causes a similar subconscious strain. Each Sigil has 10-40 charges after which it ceases to be an effective trigger. As each Sigil is unique, it cannot be recharged, except by returning for another session with its original maker. If this is not possible, the character must find another MU willing to make another for the same purpose.

Sigils cannot be used while their owners are under the effect of any mental type spell, ie *hold person, fear* etc, nor can they be used if the owner is under psionic attack. DMs should note that though mind-related, Sigils are not all related to psionics and do not register as such when used near psionic detecting creatures.

DMs should formulate their own Sigils, tailored for use in their own campaigns. The Sigil should not have too powerful an effect, keeping within the 1st-3rd level spell range. Sigils cannot be used to manifest material or semi-material things ie they cannot reproduce the effects of *web* or *fireball*, for instance.

As for buying the services of a Sigil making MU - again this really depends on individual campaigns and how much money there is flying about. Still, if the opportunity arises, the MU's bill could read something like this:

7 days at:	500gp each (basic time)
Material:	1000gp
Hypnotherapy:	2000gp
Sigil Type:	Cost 4000gp (type A)
VAT:	1500gp
Total:	12000gp (cash or similar goods equivalent.)

HYPNOTISM (Enchantment/Charm)
Usable by: MU (Neutral)
Level: 3
Range: ½"
Duration: 5-10 rounds (trance)
Area of Effect: 1 person
Components: V,S
Casting Time: 1 segment
Saving Throw: None

This is a variant of the Lvl1 illusionist spell of the same name. It can be used for willing participants and produces the necessary trance state for suggesting a message to the targets subconscious mind. Apart from its use in the charging of Sigils it can, at the DMs discretion, have other uses, such as curing phobias and other 'mind alterations'. It is not as powerful as the illusionist's spell, *suggestion*.□

Dear *WD*,

Issues 38 and *39* contain a variety of comments about my letter in *WD37* which refers to Lew Pulsipher's article about the Necromancer in edition *35*.

First let us clarify Lew's intentions. The article itself is sub-headed 'An *AD&D* Character Class'. The editor's contention - that it was intended as an NPC – is disabused both by this and by Lew's own comment in *Issue 38*.

Next I turn to the impalement gentleman who writes in *Issue 38* to 'put me straight'. Perhaps he would like to produce evidence in support of his thesis that the *AD&D* system *advocates* evil clerics, assassination and so forth. I grant that the system includes reference to these elements but that is a far cry from it advocating them. In any case my original contention was about the *introduction* of a character class which is evil; I must accept the presence of assassins in the original work though I have never seen a player successfully sustaining the running of an assassin character for long in the presence of sensible players. Trevor Graver's second point – something he alleges I forget – is something to which I entirely subscribe and indeed said so at the beginning of my letter in *Issue 37*.

Impalement is almost by definition a pretty lonely business. Perhaps Mr Graver should stick to it.

I make no comment about Lew Pulsipher's letter in *Issue 38* beyond saying that I entirely respect his viewpoint. Lew is an experienced player and DM and his observations on the way the game is played in practice do not greatly differ from my own though I have never yet seen the 'totally evil' campaign which he has obviously experienced.

Then there is the 'good over evil' contention which two letters in *Issue 39* mention. Of course this contention is not specifically mentioned in the rules but it can reasonably be inferred from a number of strands of evidence. For instance, what gives a cleric the power to turn undead? Why does this power not extend to the Revenant, which is an undead creature? Further, to change gear a bit, every single module produced by *TSR* has as its theme the confrontation between the good guys (the player characters) and the bad guys (the NPCs). Whether the adventure actually turns out as a triumph for the former over the latter is of course a matter of the players and the DM, but the basic structure itself is obvious enough. And so forth – I am sure readers can find other pieces of supporting evidence.

Finally I have to admit that I know not what is an anti-paladin (or even an Anti-Paladin). The githyanki knight is 'a form of anti-paladin' but that is the only reference of which I am sure.

Yours sincerely,
Don Turnbull,
Managing Director, *TSR (UK)*.

Dear *WD*,

Although I can't believe that many readers have the use of an *Apple* and printer, Nelson Cunnington's GAP for *Microview* [*WD40*] neatly eliminates the tedium of generating *RuneQuest* characters. The latest line from *Chaosium* is that INT and SIZ for humans should be based on 2d6+6 rather than 3d6, so line 700 of the program should read:

```
700 DATA HUMAN,3+00,3+00,2+06,2+06,3+00,3+00,3+00
```

Recent letters seem to be focussing on alignment as a bone of contention yet again. My own feeling is that the whole question of ethical choices in an adventure game must derive from the games master's handling of his campaign, not (as Don Turnbull claims is the case with *D&D*) from some arbitrary moral stance built into the rules. I have seen conflict, soul-searching and moral dilemmas among my player-characters which would never have been possible if we still used 'alignment'. I suggest that the concept of alignment is simplistic and outmoded, and thus urge games masters to discard it in the cause of good role-play. The view of Mr Turnbull and others might be that this is 'interfering' with true *D&D* – but rules are made to be broken...

Chaotically,
Dave Morris, Woking.

Dear *WD*,

I have recently bought a copy of *Striker* and an inconsistency about the vehicle design rules has cropped up. Surely, as well as affecting aircraft (in the form of drag point and G efficiency), lack of streamlining should affect the speeds of other vehicles. Assuming that the speeds are already worked out for vehicles with radically sloped fronts, drag points for moderate slopes and vertical faces, taking into account the height and width of the vehicle, would be very helpful (I suggest 2 for a moderate slope and 4 for a vertical face multiplied by the average of the height and width).

Secondly, the rules for the use of terrain following radar and avionics for VTOL aircraft on page 30 of the advanced rules should apply for grav vehicles.

Meanwhile I will take this opportunity to say that I am impressed with the new look *White Dwarf*. How can you put so much extra into it without increasing the price? Anyway, enough buttering up. Now that you have expanded your games coverage how about printing something for *Top Secret* or *Stormbringer*?

Yours,
Stephan English, Bucks.

Dear *WD*,

I was interested in an advertisement for an adventure pack gracing your pages. It was unique in bragging compatibility with eight different RPG systems. What are you waiting for? Writing scenarios simultaneously for 2 or 3 systems would please a good many gamers and inject sincerity into the idea of a 'new look' *WD*. Are we then to look forward to developments in this field, breaking the *D&D* monopoly on scenarios without upsetting its follower?

Yours hopefully,
Gary Sugden, Humberside.

– Now that we have 4 extra pages we shall be giving a lot of coverage to other systems anyway, whilst still retaining the amount of D&D *and* Traveller. *This should keep everyone happy. We will be publishing a few multi-system scenarios, as well – it is, after all, a pretty good idea. –Ed.*

Dear *WD*,

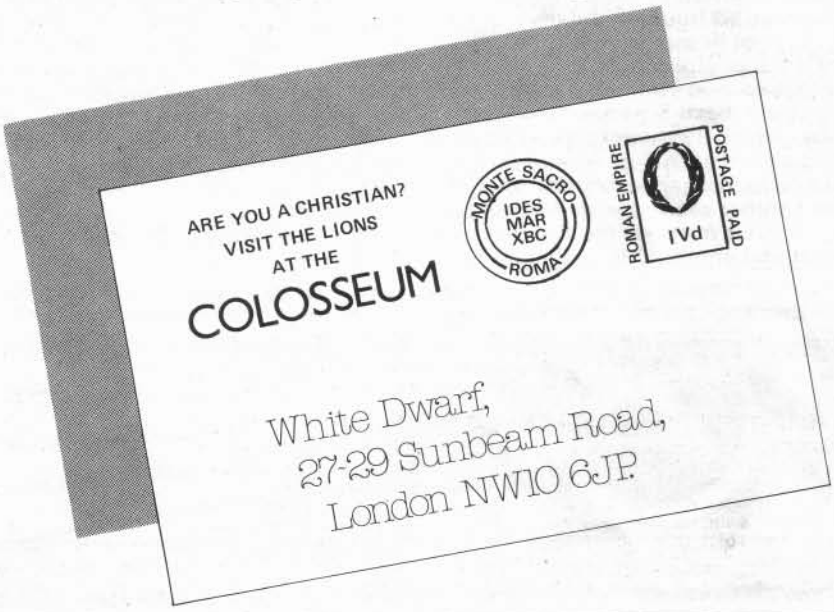
Issue 39 was excellent, especially now that you have realized that other RPGs exist apart from *Dungeons & Dragons* and *Traveller*. Although *Slayground* was not brilliant, it's a start. I am in total agreement with Gary Saul, *White Dwarf* is the best value magazine on the market, for 75 pence the only other periodicals are a lot of badly printed, third rate fanzines. One problem though, I find that other people's opinions of *White Dwarf* should be read but not on the Letters page, we can form our own opinions can't we? I like other people's useful comments though... whoops!

Yours,
Paul Rolles, Southampton.

Dear WD,

In my recent *AD&D* scenario, the *Eagle Hunt*, the description of room 68, the Temple of Kali, is incomplete. Immediately after the sentence, 'This is a trap for intruders' should be, 'There is a gilded statue of Kali on the west wall, 30' above the floor, inset with false gems for eyes. Total value 5gp.'

Yours,
Marcus L Rowland, London.



THE SNOWBIRD MYSTERY

by Andy Slack

A Traveller *scenario using the* Traveller Basic Set *and* Book 4.
Important: WD40 *is essential to play this scenario, as the ship used in the scenario is detailed in that issue. Additional, but not essential information may also be found in this issue's* Starbase.

Referee Only
Module 1: Introduction

This is a *Traveller* scenario for 2-4 players, who are agents of the elite Covert Survey Bureau [see *Starbase* this issue], and should all be run through one year's training before the scenario commences. In this, each has a one-third chance of acquiring a skill level in each of the following skills: Forgery, Bribery, Interrogation, Streetwise, Admin, Recon, Combat Engineering, and the weapon skill of their choice.

Mercenary, Book 4 will be a distinct advantage as will *'The Best of the Journal of the Traveller's Aid Society*, issues 1-4', though a capable referee could manage without them. If *Book 4* is not available, ignore all Recon or Combat Engineering skills, and refer to Module 12 for the use of Interrogation skill. In addition, the following materials (while not necessary) will save the referee's time: *Supplement 2, Animal Encounters; Supplement 1, 1001 Characters.* The players should have access to Modules 3-6 inclusive both before and during play.

Referee Only
Module 2: Background

The main problem facing an interstellar Emperor is that of revolt in the more distant of his provinces. There are several measures which can be taken to counteract this; splitting up the provinces into small units to ensure that it is as difficult as possible for a rebel lord to control the whole sector, keeping the masses happy so that they don't feel like revolting, separating military and civil rule, and so on. The Terran Empire does all these, and amongst other measures, the Emperor has control of the Imperial Inspectorate, a body of picked high-ranking officials who travel widely with their own armed forces and pay periodic surprise visits to the provinces to check up on the sector dukes and sector admirals.

Of course, 'surprise' is a loose term when applied to a visit by several thousand tons of shipping with a half-dozen marine battalions on board; the alert sector duke keeps his eyes open, and can spot such an unexpected audit several weeks away by means of high-Jump couriers and intelligence estimates. Similar methods inform most of the other officials with their hands in the cookie jar in time for their activities to be covered up, unless they are plotting something really major, like a revolt, in which case the mobilisation of troops and ships would be difficult to conceal, and the only hope would be to destroy the visiting Inspector and his men.

Yelov Salash, Sector Head of the Covert Survey Bureau for Sector Antares, has read the computer compilations and siftings of reports from detached duty scouts and other sources, and realises that an Imperial Inspector is on the way to audit the sector and can be expected to arrive in a few weeks. This gives him some cause for despair, as he has been augmenting his private fortune by the somewhat illegal method of using CSB shipping to smuggle the contraband narcotic hyperdexamine, popularly known as 'yag', and an addictive form of combat drug. This would be bad enough, but could be covered up in the normal way of things. However, the latest shipment of yag has gone missing; the ship carrying it had filed a flight plan in accordance with normal procedures, and by collating the various sources of data at his disposal, Salash estimates that the ship disappeared in the Shangrila system. He realises to his horror that Shangrila is one of the stops for the Inspector, according to his computer's predictions from earlier checks. Quickly he transmits the necessary orders; a group of agents are to be assembled from nearby systems at Shangrila and search for the missing vessel and its load of yag, using the cover of asteroid miners searching for a strike in the system's outer moons and planets. The agents won't, of course, be aware of the fact they are searching for yag.

Players
Module 3: Briefing - Commit and Destroy

As you may or may not be aware, the Bureau maintains interest in Transtellar Lines, a minor space lane carrier in the sector, to facilitate infiltration, exfiltration and supply of agents in the field, and to carry orders and reports.

The line owns several 'Explorer' class scout craft [see *WD40*] which are largely used for document transfers and as a sideline collect intelligence by monitoring communications encountered in their travels. One such vessel is the MXV-90658 *Snowbird*, which is now some weeks overdue on a routine courier mission.

The team will equip itself and members will make their way aboard normal scheduled flights to the Shangrila system (details attached) where, posing as asteroid miners searching for valuable minerals in the outer system, they will recover from the *Snowbird* the crates of documents in the hold, which are confidential accounts and operational records of CSB actions beyond the Imperial border. The team is not to examine these records or open them, since the records should be known to as few people as possible for security reasons. Of secondary importance is the discovery of the reason for the *Snowbird*'s delay and the fate of her crew.

The Bureau has arranged for prospecting licences and a suitably-modified cutter to be available to the team. The exact techniques employed are at the team's discretion; however, the records are of paramount importance and the team is authorised to take any necessary steps to retrieve them. If retrieval is impossible, the records are to be destroyed. It is also vital that the Bureau should remain unconnected with the entire operation to avoid compromising our agents and our involvement with Transtellar.

In addition to normal pay for the operation at standard rates, the team will be entitled to a cash bonus of Cr10,000 each on successful completion of their task. A draft of Cr100,0000 is available for the team to equip itself, but any remaining monies and equipment must be returned to the Bureau after the mission. This draft is also to be used for operating expenses.

Enclosures:
1. Shangrila system [Module 6]
2. Explorer class scoutships [*WD40*]
3. Navigational analysis of most likely locations of the *Snowbird*
4. Personnel records of the Snowbird's crew [Module 5]

Players
Module 4: The Cutter

The Bureau's agent-in-place on Shangrila has managed to acquire a set of papers allowing the team to prospect in the system, and in his cover identity as a factor for a large trading concern he has been able to hire a modified cutter for the team's use. He is responsible for its upkeep, and will pay the rental fees for the team.

The cutter is a 50-ton small craft capable of 4G acceleration, with two tons of fuel, and a crew of two, pilot and rider. It mounts a pulse laser (firing at -1 to hit in combat) for mining purposes, and its 30-ton playload space, normally committed to one of a variety of detachable modules, now holds an asteroid mining module worth perhaps Cr2,000,000, while the cutter itself is worth Cr28,000,000. It has 1.5 tons of space available for carrying whatever supplies the team feel are necessary, while within the module are six rather cramped cabins, facilities for skimming fuel from gas giants or other wilderness sources, a 10-ton hold for samples of ore, a small laboratory for analysing the ores, and an additional 4 tons of fuel tankage, allowing the cutter to go 12 weeks between refuelling under normal circumstances. One ton of supplies will cost Cr50,000 and last for 285 man-weeks.

The mining module is second-hand and obsolescent, as is the cutter; this is perfectly in character for a group of penurious asteroid miners.

Players
Module 5: Snowbird Crew Records

1. Norton Fitzwarren: Command Pilot Pilot-2, Computer-1	66B8AA	Age 26	2 terms	(Scout)
2. Tollen Cobbech: Navigator Medic-1, Navigation-1, Mechanical-1, Jack of Trades-1, Electronic-1, Body Pistol-1	7CB899	Age 38	5 terms	(Merchant: final rank 3rd Officer)
3. Nikolai Malvatnikov: Chief Engineer Pilot-1, Engineering-3, Jack of Trades-1	88A788	Age 30	3 terms	(Scout)
4. Addison Wesley: Second Engineer Engineering-2, Electronics-1, Gunnery-1, Steward-1	483589	Age 30	3 terms	(Merchant: final rank 4th Officer)
5. Mirrila Vigrasse: Medic Medical-2, Small Water Craft-1	78C784	Age 26	2 terms	(Other)

The Command Pilot and Chief Engineer are both CSB agents; other crew members are not, and believe themselves to be working for a normal courier firm. Team members should bear this in mind when dealing with them.

Players
Module 6: Shangrila

Shangrila (C668547-6, Agricultural, Non-Industrial; green travel zone, Imperial alignment) is a planet of little importance. Taxes are paid to the Empire in return for protection of an unobtrusive nature, since Shangrila is near the frontier of Imperial space. As part of the price for this, the Empire maintains a small port facility to service its naval and scout ships, which is also available to civilians for normal fees.

The port facility has reasonable repair workshops, but refined fuel is hard to come by and costs double the normal rates to civilian buyers.

The world has an equatorial diameter of slightly over 9,650km and being of normal density, a surface gravity of approximately 0.8 standard G. The atmosphere is normal in composition and pressure, and breathable by humans without assistance. Some 80% of the world's surface is covered with oceans, dotted with chains of islands supporting fishing communities and a thriving light industry producing excellent mid-tech speedboats with which the locals are often adept. Despite the law level of 7, it is relatively easy to obtain licences for tech 6 weapons. There is a general ban on all items of tech level 7+ outside the starport, except for medical gear.

Shangrila is the second world out from its G7 primary, and the climate is temperate at best, becoming quite cold in winter or at high latitudes. There are four other worlds of a terrestrial size and two gas giants; the gas giants are the fourth and seventh worlds from the star, the fourth being the larger at approximately jovian size, with 14 known moons and occasional claims for more. This is the main site for the asteroid mining which occurs on an irregular basis, usually by offworlders who believe that without local competition there is more chance of a lucky strike.

Important Note: All deck locations and description (A2, B8, Dorsal Turret etc) are references to the deck plans listed in the article Assignment: Survey! *in* WD40 *which gives Explorer Class (the* Snowbird *) ship specifications. Referees must have* WD40 *to play the scenario.*

Having arrived at Shangrila, equipped, and set off after the missing ship, the players will take several weeks to find it. While no maps of the system are enclosed, the characters do have a navigational analysis of the *Snowbird*'s probable path, which allows them to start looking in roughly the right place - the region of the secondary gas giant's moons, which will take about a week to reach; the cutter could do the trip in less time, but excessive speed would look suspicious.

Once per week of searching in the region indicated by their navigational analysis, the referee should roll 2d6 and add the highest level of Navigation skill available to the party. In addition, DMs may be allowed for exceptionally bright or stupid ideas on the part of the band. A modified score of 12+ indicates that weak distress signals have been picked up. During the search, the referee should also roll weekly on the encounter table of Module 8.

The distress signal mentions only the name and registry of the missing vessel, and the fact that the ship has suffered a major manoeuvre drive failure, thus rendering it unable to move. The voice is anxious, but controlled.

Approaching the source of the signals, the players observe the ship slowly tumbling end to end. Lacking manoeuvre capability, the crew have not been able to restabilise their craft, or aim their laser accurately enough to send a message by it to Shangrila; hence their resorting to the comparatively inefficient method of radio signals. There is the merest glow of navigation lights on the vessel, and no internal lighting; instruments aboard the player's craft, if they use them to check, will reveal that the ship's power plant is still functioning but at the lowest possible level. There is no sign of life.

The players will probably decide to board the stricken vessel. This requires an approach using vacc suits and backpack thrusters; characters must make the usual roll to avoid mishaps. The main airlock (A9) does not respond to attempts to open it in the normal way; a character of Electronics-3 can bypass the circuits after removing the maintenance panels. Failing that, a character of Mechanical-3 may be able to gain access via the emergency airlock (B6) by fiddling with the handcrank mechanism after removing maintenance panels. The players may decide to make an external survey of the vessel before entering; all seems in order on the outside of the ship. The interior can be seen at two points; first, through the windows of the bridge (A1), and second through the port of the dorsal turret.

A character clambering to these locations must make an additional Vacc Suit skill roll to avoid mishap (probably losing his grip and falling off). Once there, he may shine a torch into them. The dorsal turret is empty, and unlit - not even instrument lights are lit up. On the bridge, the figures of the pilot and navigator can be seen strapped into their acceleration couches. They look perfectly at peace, having removed their headsets, and very dead. There is no evidence of decomposition if the players think to ask. They should be allowed to confer since they will undoubtedly be in radio contact. Anyone with experience of working as part of a ship's crew - naval, marine, scout or merchant characters, for example - may, if he asks, be told the function of the half-dozen instruments which are lit up, providing the only illumination on the bridge. They show that the power plant and life support systems are active; everything else is shut down, and the activity of these two systems is minimal.

If the players have taken more than 15 weeks to find the ship, then the lights will be dimly red; otherwise, they will be green and fairly bright.

Players who specify making an unusually close scrutiny of the crewmen should be told that they appear to be wearing cold weather clothing, their eyes are closed, and on the console between them is an empty pill-bottle, with a plastic bottle of the kind used to hold water. From the way things are floating around, it will be clear to anyone looking in that the ship's internal gravity has been turned off.

Once aboard, the players will search the ship. Below follows a description of what they will find; each location is taken in turn. Descriptions have two parts; the first paragraph, in italics, should be read to the players as they enter the area, and the second paragraph, in normal type, is for the referee. Aboard, all lights except for those stated are off, as is the cabin gravity. The air is cold, but breathable; not quite cold enough to show condensation from the player's breathing. If anyone tries it though, the lights and gravity can be switched on; the lights by the usual studs, in the area concerned, and the gravity from the bridge or engineering by anyone with ship's crew experience, ie those who have served on ships before. The heating can also be restored from these two locations (A1 or A12). However, if by chance the players have taken more than 15 weeks to find the ship no systems can be activated - the power plant will have run out of fuel and stopped working.

If the adventurers have not found the ship by the time the power plant runs out of fuel, then the following modifications apply: First, the crew will all be dead of cold. Second, the air on board, while not actually liquefied, will be far too cold to breathe (say about -150° C) and slightly tainted with waste products from the crew's breathing. Third, there will be no power to run the lights, grav plates etc and only the bridge lights and the distress call will be functioning - batteries and solar cells provide enough power to run these. Fourth, because of the extreme cold there will be very little decomposition of the bodies.

A1: Bridge

Two human males in cold weather clothing are seated in the acceleration couches. They look dead, but perfectly composed, and relaxed, as if they'd died in their sleep. Some lights are glowing on the low console between these couches, and on it are an empty pill-bottle and a water bottle of flexible plastic. All the other consoles are apparently dead. Floating near the crewmen in the left-hand couch is a notepad with a pencil attached. Neither man is wearing his headset.

Obviously, if the gravity is turned back on the notepad will fall. It is covered with deliberate calculations in a firm hand, which are clearly estimates of how long the crew can survive under various regimes of emergency measures. Near the bottom, the answer to the final calculation is '20 weeks'; this is underlined several times, heavily. If other pages of the notebook are examined, they contain the identification of the man in the left seat; he is the pilot. Also present are his will, a brief log of the time since they were marooned by drive failure, and instructions for the finder to deliver two letters which are to be found in his pockets. The log is fairly straightforward, and will tell the players little that they don't already know, but near the front in large letters is an announcement that the crew have taken fast drug to eke out their supplies of oxygen and food, and that provided they are found by such-and-such a date (given as 15 weeks after the players started their search) they can be revived. The crew will actually be awake and active for a few hours halfway through the 6th week, but don't let the players find them moving about! The whole log only covers about four days.

The pill-bottle bears numerous formulae, trade names, and so on which will allow any character with Medical skill to deduce that it contained fast drug.

The letters in the pilot's pockets are addressed to his girlfriend (content fairly predictable and harrowing) and to the Manager of Transtellar Lines Courier Division. This second letter is a report of circumstances leading up to the crew's death and the cause of the disaster, namely unexpected and irreparable manoeuvre drive failure. Recommendations as to how to prevent the recurrence of the mishap are given, as are details of everything the crew tried to repair the motor.

Characters examining the bodies should realise that something is wrong; they are in no way decomposed, and are even slightly warm. They are the pilot and navigator.

A2: Pilot's Stateroom

This is a fairly normal-looking stateroom. It's been left neat and tidy, and the only things that stand out are a large 3-D hologram of a young girl and a metal strongbox on the desk.

The stateroom contains about what you'd expect; a remote terminal for the ship's computer, a rack of technical manuals describing pilot's procedures for the ship, spare uniforms, and an emergency vacc suit on a wall frame in case the ship is decompressed while the occupant is asleep (all staterooms have this). In the desk drawers is a bundle of love-letters from the pilot's girlfriend, and a collection of excellent quality tapes for the entertainment system. The hologram is in the form of a cube about 10cm on a side, with a stud near the bottom at the back. If pressed, this causes the image of the girl to go through a short period of movement and action (always the same loop) in which she smiles and says endearing things, obviously meant to cheer the pilot up and assure him of her affection.

The strongbox bears the crest of the Covert Survey Bureau and contains course tapes different from those presented to the players in several major aspects. A character of Electronics-3 or better may attempt to open it; on a roll of 9+ on 2d6 he succeeds, otherewise he fails. If he fails, or anyone else tries to open it without the proper key, acid spills onto the tapes inside, destroying them and causing a foul grey smoke to spurt from the box. If opened, the box's tapes present an opportunity for the referee to continue the scenario into other adventures; they detail the location and characteristics of the unexplored and deserted world where the Bureau's resources are being diverted to manufacturing hyperdexamine (see Module 10) for Yelov Salash, together with reports from his manager at the plant which make it clear what Salash's underhand scheme is. The two CSB agents in the crew are unaware of the contents and have no key to open the strongbox.

A3: Navigator's Stateroom

An unremarkable stateroom. There is a sealed letter plainly visible on the desk, but all else has been packed away neatly.

The contents of the stateroom are fairly standard except for the letter. It has been handwritten, and is addressed to a family which the players will know from their briefing includes the navigator's parents. If opened, its contents are again predictable, except for one passage in which the navigator urges his parents not to dig too deeply into the circumstances of his death, for their own good; he advises them patriotically that he died in the service of the Empire, but no-one can ever tell them exactly why for security reasons. He staters that he was aware of the risks, and considered the tasks worthwhile.

A4: Chief Engineer's Stateroom

This stateroom is the worst pigsty you've ever seen aboard a ship - things are carelessly strewn about, which is rare on a ship, where a sudden acceleration could hurl loose objects dangerously about. There are erotic posters on the walls and numerous empty beer cans dumped hastily on the unmade bed. The desk, as well as the papers on it, are very much the worse for wear and covered in hastily-scrawled calculations. Drawers and cupboards hang open revealing clothing carelessly stuffed inside them, and in one corner a mysterious apparatus is half-built, surrounded by tools, parts and bits of what appears to be charcoal, among other things.

The calculations are useless to the players - the engineer has been using his desk as a scratch-pad for years, and the figures refer to everything from his losses at diamondback to the ship's maximum power output to his beer expenses.

The mysterious apparatus will be recognised as a makeshift air purifier by anyone with Medical-2 or Engineering-2; the CE has been spending his brief periods of activity building it to give the crew a few extra hours when all other sources of oxygen have been exhausted.

A5: Second Engineer's Stateroom

A neat and orderly stateroom which has been tidied as if its occupants were leaving it for a long period. There is a dartboard opposite the door at head height, and below it a box of six darts securely fastened in.

There is nothing of special noteworthiness here.

A6: Sick Bay

This room can obviously serve as a stateroom or sick bay to taste. At the moment it is set up as a sick bay.

There is only normal medical equipment to be found, though obviously stateroom facilities are present in a stowed form - bed folded up into the wall, and so on.

A7: Crew Common Area

A deserted common area with all the cooking and recreational facilities stowed away. There are numerous posters of emergency and safety procedures on the walls in prominent places.

A careful search of this room will reveal nothing, except for about two Credits in loose change which have fallen down behind the seat cushions.

A8: Medic's Stateroom

A spotlessly clean stateroom with a large rack of journals and text tapes along one wall, and a tape viewer on the desk. Posters cover the far wall, and are concerned with first-aid procedures for the most part, although there are some pictures of high performance small water craft.

The journals and texts are mostly concerned with medicine, but about one-quarter of them have titles such as 'Antarean Power Boat News', or 'Handling Speedboats on Low Gravity Worlds'. It should be obvious that the medic's hobby is powerboating. A search of the desk drawers will reveal several certificates attesting to her skill, and membership cards for several boat clubs, some of which could conceivably be used by the players to gain access to the club premises in future adventures. A character collecting and studying the instructional manuals for six months, provided he has some practice as well, will acquire one level of expertise in Small Water Craft skill, provided he saves vs intelligence on 2d6 at the end of that time. A further attempt is permitted, but the manuals are of a simplified nature, and a character of Small Water Craft-2 or better can gain no benefit from them.

A9: Main Airlock
This is an ordinary airlock, containing safety lines and umbilicals, facilities for their attachment, and other EVA stores such as lights, overshoes, and so on. There are half-a-dozen vacc suits present.

A thorough check of the airlock will reveal that all the air tanks on the vacc suits have been emptied and are exhausted of air. The crew have used them to eke out the shipboard lifesupport by bleeding their contents into the atmosphere aboard.

A10: Ship's Locker
This room is about half-full of survival stores. There are a few blades and rifles, preserved rations, water cans, life rafts, and similar items.

The referee should feel free to add appropriate items to the above list as the characters search; however, note that all types of filter mask or respirator are missing (the chief engineer has cannibalised them for the mysterious apparatus in A4), as are the suits of cold weather clothing, which the crew are wearing, having turned down the heating to conserve power. Some of the packs of rations have been broken into, and some individuals packets are missing, having been eaten by the crew.

A11: Port Drive Access Crawlway
This passage obviously allows access to the drive machinery for repairs. All the internal plates for access to the drives have been removed, and there are clear attempts to jury-rig some kind of emergency system to the drives. An open tool kit is in the crawlway, as are several maintenance manuals and an empty beer can.

All this should be self-evident as to purpose. A character with Engineer skill can determine from a brief inspection that the manoeuvre drives are hopelessly damaged by some sort of internal explosion, possibly a component failure of an unusual type, and can only be replaced.

A12: Drive Room
This room contains controls for the engines of the ship, and instruments to monitor them. There are two couches before the consoles, both occupied; the people in them are both human, one male and one female, and are holding hands across one of the monitors between them. They seem to have died in their sleep, and on the control board before them are a small empty pill-bottle and a flexible plastic water bottle. Pinned against the rear wall by the ship's rotation is one of the scruffiest individuals you have ever seen, with his hands in his pockets and a baseball cap pulled down over his eyes. All three are wearing cold weather clothing, and there is a box in one corner of the room. The floor iris valve has been disabled, there are wires protruding from an open panel near it which have clearly been cut.

The people here are in much the same condition as those on the bridge; the same notes apply to it, and to the pill-bottle. The girl is the ship's medic, the seated man its second engineer; the pinned figure is the chief engineer. A check of the controls and instruments by someone with Engineering skill will reveal that the power plant is operating (if less than 15 weeks were required to find the ship, otherwise it is not - and side effects will be that nothing in the ship works and the air is unbreathable.) at the minimum possible level, to conserve fuel, but both it and the jump drive are in perfect condition. If the searchers think to check the fuel gauges, they will see that the tanks are practically dry, with no fuel left for another jump, which can mean one of two things; either the ship jumped a lot further than its flight plan indicates (this is in fact the truth), or it was in a great hurry and had to make two or three jumps without stopping to refuel.

The chief engineer wrecked the iris valve in the floor to seal off the cargo hold. More of this later...

A13: Starboard Drive Access Crawlway
This crawlway allows access to the drives for maintenance. All the inspection panels have been removed, and there are signs of attempts at repairs.

The only thing worthy of note here, which a thorough check against their deck plans and a search will reveal, is that the flight recorder has been disconnected, apparently accidentally and some years ago. This instrument's normal purpose is to log the ship's movements and 'vital signs' so that if it crashes, the flight recorder may give some clue as to what went wrong. The fact that it is disconnected may raise some suspicions.

B1: Payload Bay
This room is occupied by racks of extremely complex looking electronic equipment, whose control boards have been locked shut. Mostly sensors and recorders.

If the characters were not already CSB men, this would make them suspicious; no normal courier vessel would have such expensive arrays of high-powered sensors and recording gear. These instruments are used to gather intelligence during 'innocent' courier runs. Due to their training by the Bureau, the characters can quickly find the hidden keys to the covers of the control boards, hidden in one of the inspection plates. However, following Bureau doctrine, the crew have wiped clean the electronic memories as soon as it became obvious that their position was desperate, to avoid the information contained in them becoming public - or worse, falling into enemy hands.

B2: Circulation Space
An empty corridor. To either side are small alcoves with couches in them, obviously control positions for the two ventral turrets.

The ventral turrets are remotely controlled from here, and are currently fitted with sensors of various kinds.

B3; B4: Air Raft Bays
Both these rooms contain a standard air/raft and facilities for their launch and maintenance.

There is nothing of particular interest here.

B5: Circulation Space
An empty corridor. The nearby inspection plates have been removed and someone has obviously been modifying the life-support gear behind them.

The engineers and medic have been working here to stretch out their oxygen supplies by tampering with the recycler.

B6: Emergency Air Lock
A cramped chamber containing a single vacc suit and a small first aid kit.

The air bottles of the suit are empty - see A9 for the reason.

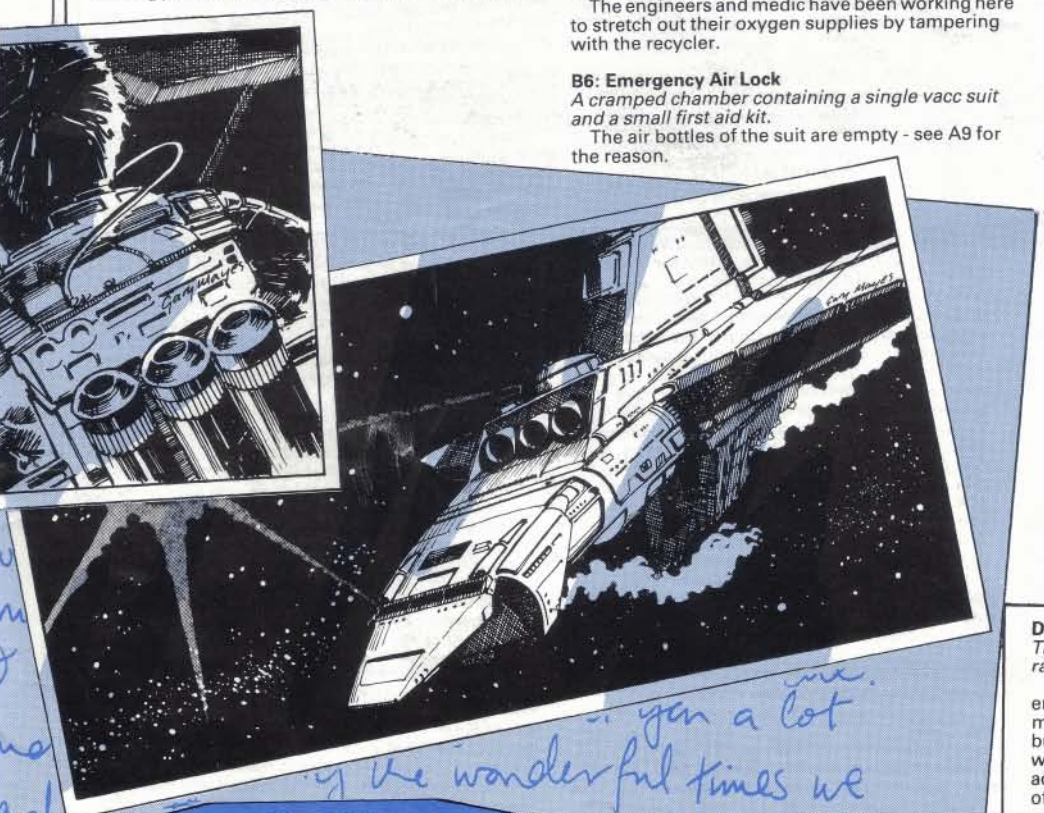
B7: Fresher
A small room containing sanitary and washing facilities, apparently adaptable for zero-gravity use.

Nothing of interest.

B8: Cargo Hold
The iris valve leading into the hold seems to have been deliberately wrecked, and quite thoroughly. A notice attached to the door on headed notepaper of Transtellar Lines announces that the contents are confidential personnel records of the company, and under Imperial law the crew are within their rights to maintain its confidentiality by any means available to them. The finders are requested to inform Transtellar of the ship's location.

The players will doubtless eventually find a way to burn or blow their way in; an Electronics-3 character could jury-rig a bypass circuit to allow the door to be opened, and energy weapons or explosives could also be used. As a last resort, entry might be gained by vandalising the cargo lift from the outside.

When they do enter the hold, they will find half-a-dozen small crates labelled *Transtellar Lines: Confidential Personnel Records: Fragile* and well-braced by assorted packing materials and ropes against accidental movement. Nonetheless, perhaps as a result of violence by the players in entering the area, perhaps due to a sudden lurch when the manoeuvre drives failed, one crate has come loose and burst open, spilling recording modules everywhere; small oblong objects about the size and shape of tape cassettes. And something else; a couple of larger containers marked *Erasable Recording Modules: Do Not Expose to Light* and with a notice explaining that the most confidential records are kept on modules which, as a security precaution, are erased if exposed to light unless certain measures are taken to prevent this. Investigation of the other crates reveals two similar containers in each. Players being a curious lot, they will likely open one to see if there is any profit to be made; they will find, not recording modules, but carefully-packed plastic bags of small white pills. These are hyperdexamine or 'yag'; see Module 10 for further details. Note only a Streetwise-2 character can recognise this substance. However, it will now be clear to the players that all is not what it seems. The recording modules are blank.



Dorsal Turret
This turret has controls for the beam laser and missile rack fitted to the ship. All its systems are turned off.

There is also an octant in a glass case for use in emergency navigation in the case that the computer malfunctions; it is possible to plot jumps manually, but exceedingly difficult and time-consuming and with a great chance of error. The octant and its accompanying manual are there more for reasons of morale than practicality.

Referee Only
Module 8: Naval Counter-Intelligence

Naval Counter-Intelligence, or NCI as it is usually called, is responsible for security and counter-espionage within the Imperial borders. This includes counter-terrorist work and occasional simple police tasks; where crime is of a scale too large for individual worlds to combat effectively, yet too small in scope to attract the attention of the Inspectorate, it falls to NCI to track down and apprehend its perpetrators. In practice, this usually means piracy and smuggling fall into NCI's province.

NCI is a great rival of the CSB, and the two agencies will do anything short of actual violence to damage each other's operations and reputations. In this case, while tracking down large-scale hyperdexamine smuggling in the Fodor subsector, NCI have come across clues to CSB involvement. Nothing that will stand up in court; but the higher-level agents in each organisation know how each other's 'handwriting' - subtle differences in the tradecraft, ways of doing things peculiar to certain agents - and are suspicious; they have recognised typical CSB techniques in the smuggling. The exact world which is the source of the 'yag' and the method of transferring it to Fodor are unknown, but they have a rough idea of which areas to search. Hence the potential for encountering them.

NCI agents are all naval officers who have been assigned to Intelligence School. Any naval officer character is usable in this role if the referee has any at hand; in the case that they have not actually been assigned to Intelligence School at any stage, the referee should roll 1d6 for each of the following skills: Forgery, Bribery, Streetwise, Gun Combat, Interrogation, with 1-2 signifying one level of expertise in the skill, 3-4 two levels and 5-6 no expertise. Interrogation skill is defined in *Books 4* and *5*; if these are not available, use the following simplification to represent their use. Once each week, the character interrogated rolls two dice and the interrogators add the sum of their skill levels to the result; a score greater than the victim's intelligence shows that he has 'broken' and revealed his knowledge. Victims with Interrogation skill may use its level as a DM in their favour, subtracting it from the roll.

Gun combat skills will most likely be in Auto Pistol or Body Pistol, but other weapons are possible. In a firefight a typical NCI tactic is for one agent to feign a serious wound or death at an early stage, and lie doggo until such time as his sudden recovery may help his comrades, for example by attacking the players from the rear after they have passed by him, carrying back a report if all the others are slain, and so on. To use this tactic, NCI men must outnumber their opponents and there must be at least three of them to start with.

NCI who find that the players are (a) CSB men and (b) in possession of yag will offer amnesty and rewards to those who will betray their organisation in this affair.

The NCI in general is a fairly efficient and gentlemanly organisation, and the players have little to fear in terms of torture or doublecross.

There is a chance (roll 10+ on 2d6) that a patrol vessel carrying an NCI team will find the *Snowbird* while the players are aboard. Subsequent events must be adjudicated by the referee using Modules

Referee Only
Module 9: Encounters in the Shangrila System

Each week that the players spend in space, the referee should roll two dice and consult the encounter table below:

Dice	*Encounter*
2-6	None
7	Type M
8	Decathlon class
9	Type M
10	Type T - naval
11	Hugin class
12	Type T - Inspectorate

This table differs from the standard encounter matrix for C class starports in introducing two new types of vessel, which are detailed below.

Type M Merchant: (*Book 2*) A standard subsidised merchant. Encounters with Type M ships are with innocent, peaceful traders carrying passengers and freight to and from Shangrila. The players arrived on one such ship, and will leave on one after completing their mission, hopefully with the cargo of the *Snowbird* and possibly with her rescued crew.

Decathlon Class: Using a 400 ton hull, the Decathlon class represents a step up from the standard free trader, purchased by successful captains and medium-sized interstellar trading companies. Its main advantage is the powerful jump drive F, rendering it capable of jump-3 and making most worlds accessible. Also fitted are Manoeuvre Drive B and Power Plant F, making the craft capable of 1G acceleration. Fuel tankage of 150 tons supports the power plant for four weeks and allows one jump-3. A model/3 computer is fitted adjacent to the bridge. There are 14 staterooms and 20 low berths. Four hardpoints are fitted, and four tons of fire control space are held in reserve, but no weaponry is initially fitted. A special compartment holds an air/raft for surface excursions, and there is a cargo hold of 96 tons. The hull is streamlined.

A standard design, the Decathlon class costs MCr169.56 and takes 14 months to build at a Tech Level 10 shipyard. A crew of six is required; pilot, navigator, two engineers, medic and steward.

Decathlon class vessels encountered by the party will be ships of the Red Giant Corporation's Beverage and Spices Division, purchasing and shipping Amurr leaves (like tea) and other agricultural produce to other worlds.

Type T: The Type T patrol cruiser is found in the deluxe *Traveller* set, but could easily be replaced by the Gazelle Close Escort or even a Type C cruiser.

Naval vessels will mostly be on routine patrols aimed at showing the flag, spotting trouble and dealing with it, and trade protection. However, there is a chance (1 in 6) that the vessel carries a team from Naval Counter-Intelligence who suspect the true nature of the *Snowbird*'s cargo and are seeking proof with which to discredit and embarass the CSB (see Module 9, Naval Counter-Intelligence) having uncovered traces of CSB handiwork in their investigations of hyperdexamine smuggling. In either case the naval personnel will attempt to board their players' vessel to make a routine check - the NCI will be more likely to spot anything amiss, of course - and the players would do well not to arouse their suspicions. Should the players get into trouble and try to get out of it by revealing their true identities, the naval crew will treat them with all possible contempt, harassment and hostility short of actual violence; the navy doesn't like the scouts, and it especially doesn't like their spy boys. NCI agents will behave likewise, but may possibly imprison or assault the players. Harmless asteroid miners, of course, while not of high status, are law-abiding citizens - when anyone's looking, that is. They are known to indulge in smuggling, which the naval officials will be looking for; if they find hyperdexamine on board, the group will be locked up and the key thrown away.

Whatever happens when a naval vessel is encountered, the referee should contrive during normal conversation or interrogation for one of the naval personnel to mention to the band, or to be overhead commenting to another crewman, that there is considerable drug-smuggling activity in the area which the navy is especially interested in stopping, before the Imperial Inspectorate arrives to check up on how they are handling the crime in the region.

Inspectorate vessels represent advance units of Imperial Inspector's forces, sneaking ahead of the main body to check things out. Also known as the Earth Police, the Inspectorate is very much in favour of rough justice. Like naval crews, Inspectorate vessels will stop the players, board their craft, and check it out. If they find nothing incriminating, they will be pleasant enough, if a trifle self-assured. If they discover the players' true identity, or find anything suspicious, they will separate the players instantly and question them separately one at a time (Refereee: ask the players to describe their cover stories to you individually, without allowing them to confer or overhear each other), with any discrepancy being regarded as sufficient grounds to impound the cutter and imprison the players. The Inspectorate are not quite a secret police; if the players can convince them of innocence, they will be released. However, any suspicions of the group being involved with illegality - eg hyperdexamine smuggling - will result in incarceration. If the Inspectorate discover that the players are CSB men involved in hyperdexamine smuggling, the band will be offered a deal; charges will be dropped against them if they will testify before the Sector Court about Salash's involvement.

Inspectorate vessels should provide the adventurers with the following information, which the referee should contrive to insert into the conversations with their crews; first, the nature and purpose of the Inspectorate (see Module 2: Background) and second, that the Inspectorate suspects some of the high-ranking Imperial personnel in the sector are misusing their powers to line their own pockets.

Hugin Class: The Hugin class scoutship is a larger, more expensive, and more flexible ship than the normal Type S. Using a 200-ton hull, it has Jump Drive C, Manoeuvre Drive C, and Power Plant C giving a performance of jump-3 and 3G acceleration. Fuel tankage of 90 tons allows one jump-3 and supports the power plant for four weeks. Adjacent to its bridge is a model/3 computer. There are 8 staterooms and 8 low berths. Two hardpoints each mount a triple turret sporting beam laser, missile rack and sandcaster. A special compartment carries a standard Air/Raft, and there is a cargo hold for 10 tons. The hull is streamlined.

A standard design, the Hugin class costs MCr106.44 and takes 14 months to build at a Tech Level 9 shipyard. A crew of 5 is required; pilot, engineer, medic and two gunners. Hugin class vessels encountered will most likely be of scout service registry, though a few may have other owners - roll one die, with 1-4 signifying scout service ownership, 5 naval registry, and 6 commercial ownership. Scout service vessels may be carrying non-urgent messages or updating star charts; the Hugin class is not much used for exploration because it requires refined fuel for safe travel on a long-term basis, and does not have the sophisticated sensors required. They are common carriers for mail, proclamations, and news, though. Naval vessesls are normally outriders for task forces or fleets, which may be passing through a few weeks later on exercises; so if a naval Hugin class ship appears, treat the next encounter as a naval Type T ship without actually rolling for the encounter. There will be 2-12 other naval vessels of varying sizes with this Type T when it appears. Commercially-owned Hugins have the same general purposes as scout vessels, but may also be transferring new trading factors to this or another system, or trying to negotiate favourable trade deals with the locals.

Referee Only
Module 10: Hyperdexamine

If the containers in the hold are opened, against orders, by the players, any character with Streetwise-2 or better will recognise the contents as hyperdexamine, and should be allowed access to this module - in private if possible, since he may not want to tell the others. Each container holds 200 pills of hyperdexamine.

Hyperdexamine is a fairly new drug, an addictive variant of normal combat drug. Like combat drug, when ingested (it comes in pill form) it increases the swallower's strength and endurance by two each. The effect phases in over the 30 seconds after ingestion, and lasts for about an hour - much longer than normal combat drug. It also provides in the user a feeling of euphoria, and he becomes convinced that he has become invincibly strong and powerful - anyone taking it without recognising it for what it is should be *told* that his strength and endurance have increased by four each to simulate this, although all attacks etc are resolved as if he was but two points stronger and more enduring. When the effect wears off, the user takes 1d in wounds.

Hyperdexamine has an insidious effect, however, in that a habitual user develops a tolerance to the drug, as well as a craving for it. How the referee simulates the craving is up to him - players will probably take it for use in combat, and if the referee is subtle they will not discover that they have inflated view of its worth. To simulate the tolerance, for each five uses of the drug the number of pills needed to obtain the effect is increased by one. Thus, for the first five uses the effect is obtained by taking one pill; the sixth through tenth uses require two pills, and so on. Each pill, of course, causes 1d of wounds - so on his 12th use of yag (the slang name for the drug) an addict is taking three pills, and will take 3d of damage when the effect wears off.

It is suggested that each week after starting to take the drug, a character must make a saving roll to avoid having to take more yag; roll 2d6, and if the result is over the character's intelligence, he *must* go on a hyperdexamine binge. A DM is applied to the dice of +1 per pill required to bring on the effects; +3 for our 12-time user above. Any friends with Medic skill may use their skill level as a + and - DM on this roll, at their discretion. If a character can avoid taking yag for six months, he has kicked the habit. Most users, of course, are eventually slain by the after-effects.

Characters with Streetwise-2 or better can sell yag in the right quarters for Cr100 x law level of the world where the sale is made per pill, thus higher law level planets yield a higher return - the supplies of yag are harder to come by. Contrariwise, on low law level worlds no-one makes a particular effort to stop yag smuggling, and it is more plentiful and prices are lower. Characters of Streetwise-1, if they are told that the stuff is yag, can get half this price for it - they get burned because they are not familiar with the market.

Anyone caught selling yag is in serious trouble; 2-12 years imprisonment.

Referee Only
Module 11: Referee's Notes

1. Instruments of Destruction

The players are all too likely to overequip themselves with weapons and armour. The referee should remind them that vast amounts of arms and armour will arouse suspicion; they are supposed to be asteroid miners, not mercenaries. If they go ahead and outfit themselves for the Third Interstellar War, well, they were warned. Interstellar and interplanetary space within the Terran Empire is considered to be at Law Level 3 for purposes of deciding which weapons are legal; while there is no need to roll for police harassment on a daily basis in space, any boarding party which finds weapons contravening the limits of Law Level 3 will automatically suspect the group of foul play. Specifically, combat armour, battle dress, explosives, poisons, lasers, energy weapons, and body pistols will be sufficient grounds for imprisonment. Clearly non-military explosives will be allowable, since the group are supposed to be miners.

Referees should bear in mind that even with the power off, iris valves can still be forced open (or closed) on a throw of 9+ on 2d6, with DMs of +1 if character has strength 10+, +2 if dexterity 10+, -3 if wearing vacc suit. It may be necessary to drop gentle hints about this possibility to the party.

2. The Crew

If rescued, the crew will be properly grateful and the players will have several people who owe them a favour - a more subtle reward than cash, but always useful. The pilot and chief engineer, being CSB men, will be anxious to get their cargo moved on to the proper hands - there are of course certain code introductions by which the players can assure them of their true identities if they so wish, and it would be wise for at least one to do so since otherwise the rescued agents are likely to try a doublecross to speed their cargo on its way. The rescued agents are unaware of the true nature of their cargo, believing the same cover story as that told to the players. Once they discover that there are CSB agents in the rescuing party they will confide in them, saying that they are somewhat suspicious of their orders; these specify disconnecting the flight recorders and filing false flight plans with both traffic control *and* the CSB. This is highly irregular, and they believe something underhand is going on - possibly one of the high-ranking administrators is a double agent, so that he must be fed false data.

3. Timing

When the players arrive on Shangrila, it is three weeks since the *Snowbird* was expected to report in. They will have 1-2 weeks cooling their heels in Port Royal before the cutter is ready, an indeterminate time before they find the ship; it will then take them 1-3 weeks to return and await the arrival of a ship out of the system. Normal encounters should be rolled using *Book 3* on the ground and Module 11 for incoming ships.

4. After the Adventure

Once the scenario has been played through, it still provides some useful things for the referee. The CSB, the NCI and their rivalry can provide future plots and employment - apart from the obvious ones, the referee may like to consider that in the case of total success by the group, Salash may decide they know too much and try to remove them. There are several new ship types and a planet to use in later games.

The Explorer class ship in particular was designed to be loaned to a group of adventures by a powerful patron for a long-term commission, much in the manner of *Adventure 4, Leviathan*.□

RuneRites *is a regular department devoted to* RuneQuest, *edited by Oliver Dickinson. This issue, we take another look at* Unarmed Combat.

Unarmed Combat II

Unlucky Eddie (Varley)! Setting him up in the first *RuneRites* column [*WD30*] drew some flak, but also extracted valuable responses from Dave Morris, Andrew Roberts and Oliver Macdonald among others; even our own Jamie Thomson was moved to comment that the training costs should be higher for the damage done. To judge from the variety of approaches, there is no obvious way to model unarmed combat, let alone special skills, in *RuneQuest* terms, and so I do not wish to endorse a particular system, but single out some points made.

Toughening up

Andrew Roberts made the very important point that arms and legs would have to be toughened to be able to parry weapons or deliver damage through armour without taking unacceptable damage. This toughening would produce a 'shield' effect, which would only operate for a deliberate attack or attempt at parrying, not as ordinary armour, and would be detectable, in the form of hard callouses etc, by any other practitioner of unarmed combat at Spot Hidden ability + 5% for each point of 'shield'. The maximum number of 'shield' points on any limb is 1 per 10% attack/parry ability with that limb; the cost is cumulative, starting at 200L for an arm, 300L for a leg (going up to 400/600, 600/900, etc). One effect will be to slow down DEX-based skills; for each 'shield' point take 1 from DEX for the purposes of the Manipulation bonus (*I take it that only 1 is subtracted as long as there is no more than 1 anywhere -OD*) and 5% from highly manipulative skills like Lock Picking (but only if that hand has been toughened, obviously). The relevant results will then be, in the case of Arm Parry (for which a 300-500-1000L progression in training is suggested):

Attacker	Defender	Effect
Hits	Parries	Parrying limb takes damage, minus 'shield' points (*but not from hafted weapons of any sort, I would suggest -OD*).
Misses	Parries	Attacker's weapon takes damage, up to the maximum of 'shield' points (*only long-hafted weapons, I suggest -OD*).

Damage

It seemed generally felt that this should depend on the level of skill or be partly temporary or non-lethal. Some provided complex tables to model this, but I wonder if GMs are ready to cope with yet another table! In Oliver Macdonald's system, damage caused in the ordinary way by fist, foot or head is normally temporary, regained at a rate of 1 point per hit location per 2MR, but a special hit (20% or less) will do proper damage *as well* (ie same as temporary, or roll separately?), and a critical will ignore armour or do double damage. But Dave Morris's system of stun damage, done in Brawling (of which more below) if no weapon is used, and accounting for most of the damage in Fisticuffs, may seem preferable. This damage is temporary, but an area reduced to 0 points or lower will not function until the character's Recovery Rate has brough it back to 1HP. This Rate depends on CON, which governs how many 6 second periods (½MR's) are required to regain 1 point in all locations. Thus:

CON	01-04	05-08	09-12	13+
Recovery Rate	4	3	2	1

Healing can also repair stun damage, at a rate of 2 points per 1 of *healing*, but will affect any ordinary damage first. This will involve some extra bookkeeping during a MR, but despite what is said in *RQ* this is necessary anyway to keep track of POW lost, effect of spells, incapacitations (which take place as soon as delivered) etc. Dave's system for doing real damage as well as stun damage [see below] might seem cumbersome; I would suggest that GMs use their brains, bearing in mind that criticals and specials should have the effect of knocking unconscious, breaking a bone or similar. A highly skilled boxer or martial artist could always announce the intention of not doing lethal damage, for great skill allows judging one's blows (a similar system could be used with weapons if you wished to knock someone unconscious and not kill, something for which present rules make no allowance specifically.)

Skills

A distinction clearly needs to be made between martial arts proper and ordinary fighting, such as might be necessary in emergency in battle or be appropriate in a barroom brawl. Dave Morris separates Fisticuffs (which includes kicks and blocks), in which training is possible, from Brawling, which can only be improved by experience. I like his Brawling, and his description follows.

Brawling covers the full range of brutal fighting techniques - gouging, throttling, butting, pummelling, etc. It is primarily dependent on the character's characteristics rather than on training.

	01-04	*05-08*	*09-12*	*13-16*	*17-20*	*Each +4*
STR	-10%	-5%		+5%	+10%	+5%
POW	-5%				+5%	+5%
DEX	-5%				+5%	+5%

The basic chance in Brawling is 25%; ability can be increased only by experience, to a maximum of 75%. A brawling character cannot parry, but if he or she has a Defence bonus this still applies; an exception is in the first round that a combatant tries to initiate Brawling - if the other combatant can parry the tackle, using Fisticuffs ability if he has no weapon, then Brawling does not take place. A Brawling character has the option of using ability in Fisticuffs or with a dagger, at half normal value, if this is higher than his or her Brawling ability.

In Brawling, attacks are rolled every 6 seconds (½MR). Roll 1-6 for strike rank, with the following modifiers:

STR 16+ -1, STR 5- +1, DEX 16+ -1

Brawling Damage Table

Unarmed	1d4+1	Roll for stun damage
Dagger	1d4+2	All potentially lethal damage
Claw	1d4+1	All potentially lethal damage
Heavy Cestus	1d3+2	All potentially lethal damage
Light Cestus	1d3+1	All potentially lethal damage

Larger weapons like a short sword are too unwieldy for use in a brawl proper.

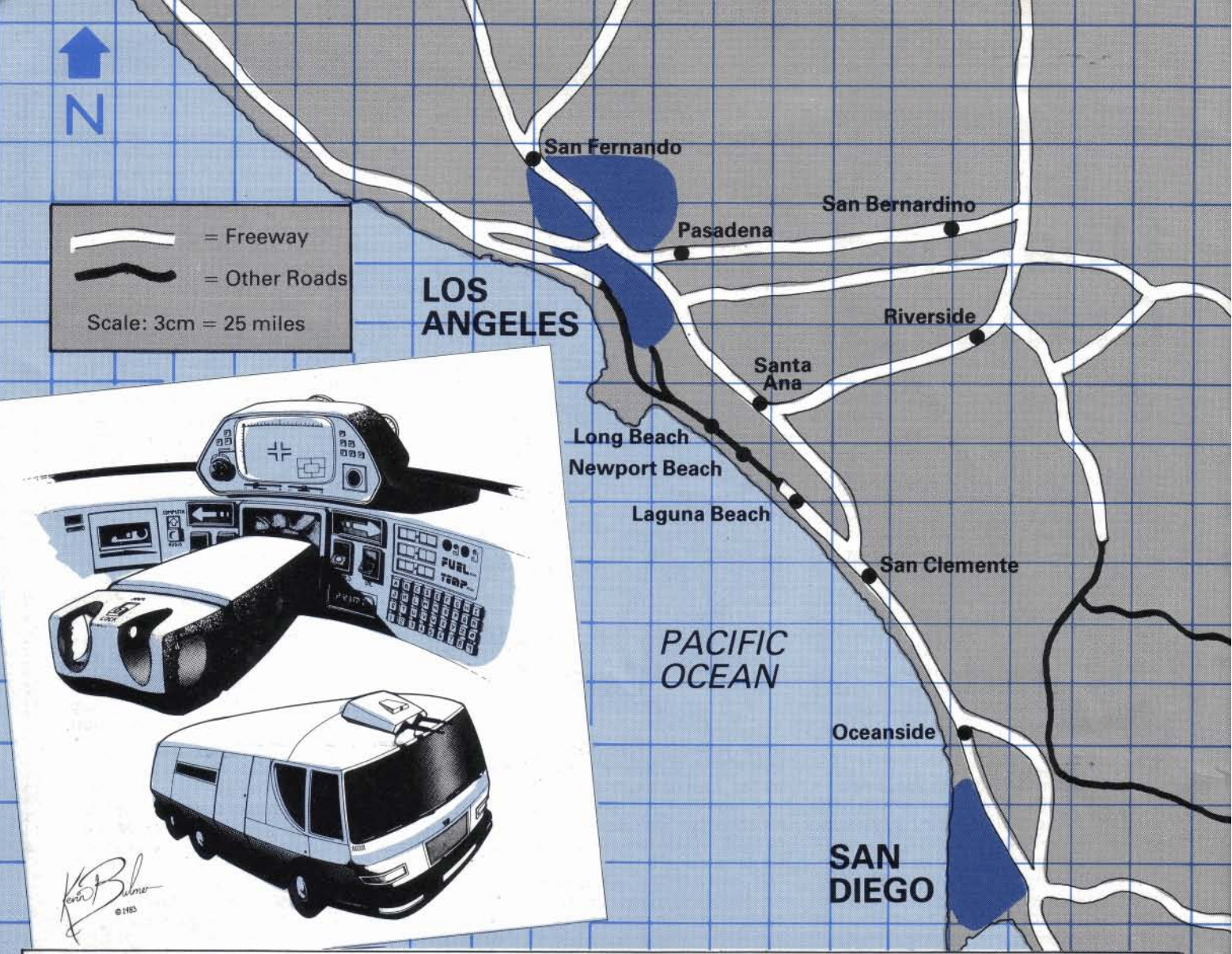
Fisticuffs, in Dave's system, begins at 15% basic and is trained for at the rate 400-800-1600L; damage is rolled on a 1d8 table, scaling up from 1 point at 5-25% skill and 1 rolled, to 6 at 95%+ skill and 8 rolled, and whatever figure is rolled should be rolled again (d2, 3, 4 etc) to see how much is stun damage.

Die	*Skill Level(%)*				
Roll	*05-25*	*30-50*	*55-75*	*80-90*	*95+*
1	1	1	1	2	2
2	1	1	2	2	3
3	1	2	2	3	3
4	2	2	3	3	4
5	2	3	3	4	4
6	3	3	3	4	5
7	4	4	4	5	5
8	5	5	5	5	6

The resultant number is the damage done.

As he notes, if these rules are used, Head Butt, Kick and Fist no longer apply, but Grappling may still be learnt; any damage taken from a throw should be rolled in the same way, for stun damage. GMs might want to develop their own system.

I hope this is enough to give people ideas; I have not been able to incorporate everything sent in for lack of space, but thanks for it all, contributors! The topic is still open for comments; I can't believe everything's been covered. Contemplate the marvellous illustration to *Rumble in the Tin Inn [WD33]*, for instance...□



ASSIGNMENT: FREEWAY DEATHRIDE!

A Car Wars mini-scenario by Marcus L Rowland

Referees will need normal materials only

Sometime before the legalization of Autoduelling most road vehicles were still unarmed, although a few manufacturers had begun limited production of stock vehicles with combat capability.

Introduction

In an effort to gain legislative support in making road duelling legal, the American Pro-Am Autoduellists Association (APAAA) has set up an illegal 'policing' organisation nicknamed the 'killers' by the press and TV which is intended to stamp out the worst excesses of road violence - the predators who rob or kill defenceless civilians. The policing organisation is divided into independent regulatory units (or cells), receiving their orders by scrambled telephone, telex or courier. Regulatory unit 7 is the latest addition to this force, a mixed group of veteran arena fighters and novices based in Tucson, Arizona.

Regulatory Unit 7

This group can be set up with any desired number of personnel and vehicles, but with the following resource limits:

Total budget = $50000
Driver Skill = 35 Gunner Skill = 20
Cyclist Skill = 10
Group Prestige = 25, but there must be no more than one double ace or two single aces in the group.

Within these limits any desired allocation of money and skills may be made, but the budget must be used for all purchases, including personal weapons and armour.

Equipment. All normal methods of vehicular construction are available. A few stock vehicles are also available, but no-thing like the range in later years:

Mini Sherman:	Standard Model, $8350 (no design options).
Hotshot:	Standard Model, $15320 (no design options).
Intimidator:	Standard Model, $17640 Optional Model, $17800

The slightly high prices of these vehicles reflect the fact that they are built for the arena market, not for mass sales. An early model of armed cycle is also available, the Ninja (later discontinued):

Ninja: Medium cycle, super power plant, heavy suspension, PR Tyres. Armour: Front 10, Back 10, Left 3, Right 3, Under 4. Mounts one rear spikedropper. Handling class 2, Acceleration 15mph, Weight 1000lb, Cost $4230.

Designed as a road courier bike. The manufacturer also produces a sidecar, with the combination called a Ninja Assassin.

Assassin Sidecar: Light sidecar, improved suspension, PR Tyres, Armour: Front 5, Back 5, Right 3. Mounts one rocket launcher forward. Weight 560lb, combination handling class 3, acceleration 10mph, Cost $2215.

Option: Sidecar armament can be replaced with a machine gun and extra magazine for an extra $700, characteristics remaining unchanged.

In addition to normal combat equipment players may wish to purchase items from the following list, most of which are only obtainable illegally:

Police radio transmitter/receiver - $450 (1 available)
Police uniforms (Arizona state police) - $200 (2 available)
Used police car (unarmed, unarmoured) - $1200 (1 available)
CB rigs $115 (unlimited supply)
Radio jammmer $600 (1 available)
Flare pistol & 5 flares $95 - (unlimited supply)

Once the team have prepared their equipment and allocated skills and prestige the referee should check that all is in order then brief the group for their first mission.

Referees Information

Prestige as allocated above can be used for the purchase of personal vehicles only - an ace or double ace cannot buy vehicles or equipment for the entire team. The referee may allow the team to reserve up to $500 for contingency purchases once the briefing is complete, but such funds must be spent before the commission begins. It is possible that players may wish to buy equipment other than that listed; if so the referee should set the price by doubling the current British price and using the result as the dollar price. This is a rough guide only.

Each mission assumes the use of at least three vehicles, and carries a bounty for successful completion which should cover normal expenses, plus the purchase of additional or replacement vehicles and/or upgrading weapons. Replacement or additional personnel can be recruited before each mission, but no re-allocation of skills may be made, and all recruits will be inexperienced.

Mission 1:

APAA TELEX C458 ++ CLEAR TEXT OF SCAMBLED MESSAGE ++ SECRET ++

FROM: APAAA CENTRAL CLEARING, FRESNO, CALIFORNIA.
TO: REGULATORY UNIT 7, TUCSON, ARIZONA.

MESSAGE BEGINS: UNIDENTIFIED ARMED VEHICLE ATTACKING LONE CIVILIANS ON LOS ANGELES - SAN DIEGO FREEWAY. ASSAILANT APPEARS TO PREFER FEMALE VICTIMS, MOTIVE UNKNOWN.
5 KILLED, 9 INJURED TO DATE. STRONG FEM/LIB POLITICAL PRESSURE FOR FAST SOLUTION, PROBABILITY 85% THAT EFFECTIVE APAAA ACTION WILL GAIN SUPPORT OF THIS INFLUENTIAL LOBBY. MISSION BOUNTY $20000.
MESSAGE ENDS.

If the team make enquiries they will learn that this stretch of Californian freeway runs through hilly ground near the coast. It has been the scene of several vicious motorcycle gang raids. All towns in the area maintain strong defences, but the road is relatively undefended, with State Police presence limited to car convoys or single armoured cars. The team will also learn that Arizona and California use the same brand of police car and radio transmitter, but entirely different uniforms. Prolonged enquiries will eventually let the team discover that all attacks have taken place at dusk, on weekends, and between Santa Ana and Oceanside.

Whatever plan the team adopt should reflect these circumstances. Other important factors are traffic density, which is only one vehicle for several miles of road; communications, with the effective ranges of CB rigs and Police radios 10 miles and 30 miles respectively; visibility, which is restricted to 1 mile in twilight conditions (flares are visible at 5 miles range, and increase visibility to a 2 mile range from the flare); and the real or apparent sex of team members - female team members or disguised males are more likely to attract the killer's attention.

The killer is Jerome Partick, an autoduellist who was run down by a woman driver and severely injured in his last arena combat. He was paralysed from the waist down but has built and armed a specially modified van with hand controls for all systems. Partick knows that the woman who injured him lives in California, but does not know her real name since she fights masked as the 'San Diego Angel'. Partick cannot persuade any legitimate arena to let him fight her, due to his physical condition, and has resorted to random attacks on women drivers at weekends since he believes (mistakenly) that she must use the freeways to return home after arena combats. Partick's home is in Laguna Beach and he generally travels South to the outskirts of San Diego then North as far as Santa Ana, attacking the first lone women driver he encounters. Partick is extremely wary of traps and will be alert for any obvious ambush or decoy vehicle. Partick's van is a unique vehicle, and any other driver using it would suffer a -5 modifier on combat skill:

Partick's Vehicle

Van: Heavy Chassis; heavy suspension; super power plant; 6 puncture-resistant tyres. Armour: Front 10, Back 10, Left 10, Right 10, Under 5, Top 5. Mounts 2 forward linked machine guns, rear mine dropper, rear oil sprayer. Accessories fire extinguisher, target computer. Weight 5195lb (including driver and 150lb wheelchair loaded via rear door ramp) with six empty cargo spaces and one empty equipment space (wheelchair occupying 2 spaces). Any significant cargo or equipment increase will reduce acceleration; normal characteristics are weight 5195lb, handling class 2, acceleration 10mph, cost $14650.

Wheelchair: Custom built from motorcycle parts; 2 standard tyres (+2 small castors), small cycle power plant; mounts smokescreen unit and two concealed submachine guns under the chair arms. Weight: 150lb. Handling class 0, acceleration 5mph, maximum speed 35mph, cost $2,700 (mostly for specialised metalwork and labour).

Partick himself is armed with a loaded heavy pistol and two concealed grenades, and carries $340 in a wallet (also holding his California driving licence, credit cards, etc) with a further $2100 concealed in a safe in his home (keys on van bunch). His home garage holds a super power plant, a rocket launcher, and two machine guns, plus an assortment of useful tools.

If inexperienced players use this scenario the referee should avoid any complications. However, an experienced party should be given additional problems such as police intervention or another group of manhunters, led by the San Diego Angel herself (Double ace, skills: Driver 22, Gunner 16, Cycle 7, drives a Hotshot) out to catch the freeway killer for the glory of Womens Liberation.

Mission 2

Motorcycle gang kidnaps the governor of Texas and holds him for $10,000,000 ransom. The team must find and eliminate them (without harming the governor) before the police reach them. Suggested equipment budget for cycle gang $45,000. Possible complications are police action, National Guard action, and rival gang action. Bounty: $75,000 plus possible legalization in Texas.

Mission 3

Armed hijackers (probably experienced autoduellists) steal a tactical atomic bomb and threaten Las Vegas. The team must catch them (without detonating the bomb) and return it to Vandenburg Air Force Base without being arrested. Suggested equipment budget for the hijackers is $80,000. Possible complications are CIA and/or military activity, desert conditions, and subversion - one or more members of the hijack gang could infiltrate the team as new members, and thus be in a perfect position to arrange 'accidents'. Mission bounty is $60,000 plus possibly swinging the military lobby towards autoduellists.

Mission 4

A lone assassin, apparently a very experienced autoduellist with military skill, is attacking members of the Mafia and Mafia-owned businesses. The Mafia have offered a $100,000 reward for his or her death and wield enormous political influence. The team must either kill or fake the death of the assassin. Suggested equipment budget for the assassin is $75,000, to be spent on one vehicle only. The referee may optionally allocate normal passenger space to weapons systems at a cost of $1300 and 50lb per space, or allow multiple power units in a single vehicle, when designing the assassins machine. Possible complications are police action and/or Mafia hit teams.□

Fiend Factory *is a regular department for readers'* D&D *monsters. This issue sees the continuation of the series...*

INHUMAN GODS

More Divinities for Psuedo-Men: Part III

by Phil Masters

In this serialized study of the divinities of the Fiend Folio *and past* WD Fiend Factory *monsters once again we use the format of* Deities & Demigods. *We begin with an icy and vaguely humanoid race...*

FROSTMEN
Kraada, Demigod
Armour Class: -2
Movement: 22"
Hit Points: 160
No of Attacks: Nil
Damage/Attack: Nil
Special Attacks: Gaze, fear, earthquakes
Special Defences: See below
Magic Resistance: 60%
Size: L (10' diameter)
Alignment: Lawful Evil
Worshipper's Align: Lawful Evil (Frost Men)
Symbol: Black Disc
Plane: Negative Material
Cleric/Druid: 8th level cleric
Fighter: Nil
Magic User/Illusionist: 7th level MU
Thief/Assassin: Nil
Monk/Bard: Nil
Psionic Ability: IV
S:19 I:22 W:21 D:12 C:22 CH:-2

The history of this god is obscure; some suggest that he is a renegade son of Cryonax, Prince of Evil Cold Creatures [see the *Fiend Folio*]. It is thought that Kraada was once worshipped by a sect of humans, who were driven out by society because of their evil ways; to aid them, and as a reward for their fidelity, Kraada lent them the dreadful power of his one-eyed gaze. Certainly, frost man clerics refer to him as 'the giver', 'the first eye', or 'he who rewards truth'.

In form, Kraada appears as a low, hulking, dark, somewhat crab-like being, with a single, large eye on his front edge. This eye has an innate *true seeing* power, and can see in any conditions - even magical darkness; it can also, up to six times per day, project a blast of cold in a 60' long cone, 5' wide at the point and 20' wide at the base, doing 6-60 points of damage to all caught within (halved by a save vs breath weapon). Kraada has no weapon or body attack ability, but this gaze is but one of his deadly powers; he can also cast two *earthquake* spells per day as a 30th level cleric, *cause fear* to all in a 20' radius as the spell thrice per day (save vs spells negates), *create darkness* (5' radius) with the power of a tenth level cleric at will, cast a *magic missile* at seventh level power at will, and *summons* 1-4 ice toads once per day.

Kraada radiates (non-harmful) cold, detectable up to 50' away; his body is so cold that any being touching it takes 2-12 points of damage, and any object touching it must save vs destruction by cold - weapons which harm the god save at -1 due to force of contact. The deity is immune to cold, *petrifaction*, level draining, and *all* the effects of earthquakes; poison, lightning, and gas do him half normal damage.

Clerics of Kraada have never been known to attain more than second level abilities. They sacrifice by cold or crushing at small, well-hidden shrines.

MOUNTAIN GIANTS
Zrunta Mountainheart - Lesser God
Armour Class: 0
Move: 18"
Hit Points: 320
No of Attacks: 2
Damage/Attack: 5-50
Special Attacks: Thrown Boulders for 4-32
Special Defences: +2 or better weapon to hit, spell reflection.
Magic Resistance: 45%
Size: L (28' tall)
Alignment: Chaotic Neutral
Worshipper's Align: Chaotic Neutral (Mountain Giants)
Symbol: Mountain
Plane: Limbo
Cleric/Druid: 8th level cleric
Fighter: As 16+ hit dice monster
Magic User/Illusionist: 6th level MU
Thief/Assassin: Nil
Monk/Bard: Nil
Psionic Ability: VI
S:25 (+7,+14) I:20 W:16 D:19 C:23 CH:15

Somewhere in Limbo there lies a great mountain range, at the centre of which is a vast peak; at the heart of this mountain is a cavern, in which broods Zrunta, father to all Mountain Giants - usually, it is said, picking his teeth with Slaad weapons...

Zrunta only intervenes occasionally in the universe of men and giants, for he is essentially a libertarian; his creed is that all beings - especially mountain giants - should make their own way in freedom and independence. However, if lesser races are too weak and silly to avoid enslavement by his offspring, that is *their* problem. On the other hand, any lesser being with insolence to enslave a

mountain giant is looking for trouble (and has a 3% chance of being punished by the god). Incidentally, Zrunta is unlikely to be worried if his descendants break nominally sacred vows to lesser beings.

Zrunta fights with a great stone club in each hand, doing 5-50 points of damage on a hit, but he can also tear great boulders from *any* rock surface and toss them up to 30" with devastating effect. In general, however, he prefers to *summons* one or more of his four elder sons (as required); these are mountain giants of great size, with maximum hit points, +2 to hit, and +2 on all saving throws. Zrunta can *gate* in any of the four at will; once per day he can also *summons* certain monsters, who take 1-3 rounds to appear; these will be 2-5 mountain giants (45%), 3-8 hill giants (10%), 6-36 ogres (30%), or 4-16 trolls (15%). Also once per day, Zrunta can speak a *holy word*.

Power word, earthquake and *chaos* or *confusion* spells are 55% likely to be reflected back on the caster if cast at Zrunta, and he retains his magic resistance and saving throw even when this power fails him. He is immune to *charm* and *hypnosis* in all forms.

Mountain giant shamans are curiously weaker than those of most giants, probably because the race has little inclination to religion; they are limited to 5th level advancement. However, a few witch-doctors with abilities of up to fourth level of magic-use have been reported.

GREENMEN [See *White Dwarf 27*]
Carratriatuh - Demigod
Armour Class: -2
Movement: 32"
Hit Points: 175
No of Attacks: 2 (sword) or 5/2 (open hand)
Damage/Attack: Sword; 4-10 (+12); Hand; 4-16.
Special Attacks: Lightning Bolts
Special Defences: Nil
Magic Resistance: 80%
Size: L (7½')
Alignment: Neutral
Worshipper's Align: Varies (Greenmen)
Symbol: Sword
Plane: Ethereal
Cleric/Druid: 4th level cleric
Fighter: 18th level ranger
Magic User/Illusionist: Nil
Thief/Assassin: Nil
Monk/Bard: 12th level Monk
Psionic Ability: VI
S:24 (+6,+12) I:12 W:17 D:24 C:22 CH:19

Greenmen have a somewhat underdeveloped concept of mythology, but one being whom they generally respect highly is Carratriatuh, who appears to represent all their ideals of sophistication and power. This being is remarkably manlike, possessing two arms and a human face, but accounts vary as to his other characteristics and composition.

Carratriatuh seems to be a wandering warrior of considerable talent; he will remain with one tribe of greenmen, or in one locale, for an unpredictable period before vanishing into the ethereal plane, to appear elsewhere just as mysterious-

ly. If necessary, he can *summons* his bodyguard - ten large greenmen, each with at least five hit points per die, armoured to AC3, and wielding two halberds each. The deity himself usually attacks with a *+2 broadsword*, but if he is disarmed, or if he wishes to take an opponent alive for questioning, he will employ his monkish open-hand combat ability. He also carries a wand which will project a bolt of lightning, 1" wide and 6" long, doing 3d6 damage, once per *turn*.

Greenmen priests are few and far between, only appearing in the largest greenman communities; such limited reports suggest that they are shamans of no more than third level clerical ability.

GRIMLOCKS
Klagg - Demigod
Armour Class: -1
Move: 18"
Hit Points: 125
No of Attacks: 2
Damage/Attack: 2-20/2-20
Special Attacks: Rending, Magic
Special Defences: +2 or better weapon to hit, never surprised, immunities.
Magic Resistance: See below
Size: L (12')
Alignment: Neutral Evil
Worshippers' Align: Neutral Evil (Grimlocks)
Symbol: Taloned Hand
Plane: Hades
Cleric Druid: See below
Fighter: as 16+ hit dice monster
Magic User/Illusionist: See below
Thief/Assassin: 6th level assassin
Monk/Bard: Nil
Psionic Ability: VI
S:22 (+4,+10) I:16 W:10 D:14 C:23 CH:-3

Grimlocks will worship virtually any being of exceptionally evil inclinations, but they have a special regard for a loathsome Daemon called Klagg, probably because he rather resembles themselves. Klagg is a huge, slightly hunched humanoid with white, staring eyes, whose body is covered with patches of loose, dead skin, and who emits an unpleasant, decaying stench. Klagg can see ultra-violet and infra-red radiations *only* - nothing in the visible spectrum - but his sense of smell allows him to tell the type, approximate numbers, direction and distance of any being within half a mile, and his hearing is so good that he is never surprised (magical silence alerting him by a simple absence of sound). He fights with two talons, each doing 2-20 points of damage from this rending. Klagg can only be harmed by +2 or better weapons, and *paralysis* or poison in any form is useless against him, as are fear-based attacks, *disintegration, death magic*, and visual illusions. This demigod is also quite immune to all first level spells, and has a 99% resistance to all second level; this resistance is reduced by 5% for each level above second of the spell, making Klagg 84% resistant to fifth level magic, for example, and 64% to ninth level. Klagg also *regenerates* any damage not caused by fire, acid, or holy water, at the rate of 4 points per melee round. The latter attack form does him 4-9 points of damage on a full hit, 1-3 with a splash.

Klagg has a number of magical powers, of which he can use any one on any round in which he is not otherwise engaged. He can cast *curse* on up five beings at up to 6" range, or *bestow curse* on a single individual within 2"; *detect* or *dispel magic* as a 15th level magic user, and ▷

▷*cause fear* (by touch), all at will; he has full divine powers, and if he wishes, may clasp any opponent whom he strikes with both hands simultaneously, and then *teleport* with that being still in his grasp; thrice per day each, he may cast *blindness, cause disease*, produce *darkness, 10' radius*, and *hold person*, and once per day each, he can speak an *unholy word* and cast *destruction*. He can summons 6-60 grimlocks to his aid in any day; they will arrive 2-5 rounds later. Finally, Klagg has an 85% chance, once per day, of opening a magical portal to bring in a mezzodaemon or nycadaemon [see *FF*] (60% the former, 40% the latter), who will aid him in return for future favours; Klagg is clever enough to keep such promises, as this guarantees that such *summonsed* creatures will co-operate in future.

This being speaks only his alignment tongue, that of grimlocks, and the various dialects of daemonkind, but he can communicate with any intelligent being by a limited form of telepathy.
Grimlock priests are shamans of up to 3rd level clerical ability; the race has no witch-doctors. Worship invariably takes the form of cannibalistic blood-orgies in underground temples. Clerics usually fight with their bare hands.

LAVA CHILDREN

Halnass Fire-Father and **Quorggg** Stone-Mother - Demigods

	Halnass	*Quorggg*
Armour Class:	1	-3
Move:	24"	10"
Hit Points:	110	110
No of Attacks:	3	1
Damage/Attack:	2-12/2-12/3-18	4-40
Special Attacks:	See below	Nil
Special Defences:	See below	See below
Magic Resistance:	40%	55%
Size:	L (12')	L (10')
Alignment:	Neutral	Neutral
Worshipper's Align:	Neutral (Lava Children)	Neutral (Lava Children)
Symbol:	Burning Stone	Burning Stone
Plane:	Elemental Plane of Fire	Elemental Plane of Earth
Cleric/Druid:	3rd level cleric	15th level cleric
Fighter:	16th level ranger	As 16+ hit dice monster
Magic User/Illusionist:	9th level MU	Nil
Thief/Assassin:	Nil	Nil
Monk/Bard:	Nil	Nil
Psionic Ability:	IV	V
	S:19 (+3,+7) I:21	**S:22 (+4,+10) I:21**
	W:17 D:22 C:16 CH:16	**W:18 D:15 C:20 CH:16**

The lords of the four elements are often rivals, who prohibit co-operation between their underlings; some of them, and many of the higher powers of the universe, fear what might follow, should the order of things be flouted. Yet despite such rules, Halnass, a prince of the element of fire courted and bred with Quorggg, high countess of the ores and stones.

Higher powers soon intervened, and the two were hunted down, ensnared, and returned to their respective planes, where cages of sorcerous strength were created to hold them. However, the offspring of this strange mating escaped, and found refuge in lairs on the *Prime Material Plane*; these are the lava children, who inherited powers from both of their parents; they are loyal children, and many of their number - especially the priests - seek unceasingly for ways to re-unite their parents, and to avenge their captivity.

On occasion, one of the two demigods breaks free from captivity, or is *summonsed* by magic that can penetrate his or her prison; on such occasions, the escaper tends to wander the planes, battling those who try to re-capture him or her, while seeking some way to free the other partner. Neither has ever succeeded, and in fact it seems certain that divine forces of immense power would intervene were any being ever so foolish as to attempt to bring the two together (by, for example, two *gate* spells). However, lava child clerics often seek some way to bring their two great ancestors to the same point in space and time, such as use of scrolls or devices bearing or projecting *wish* or *gate* spells.

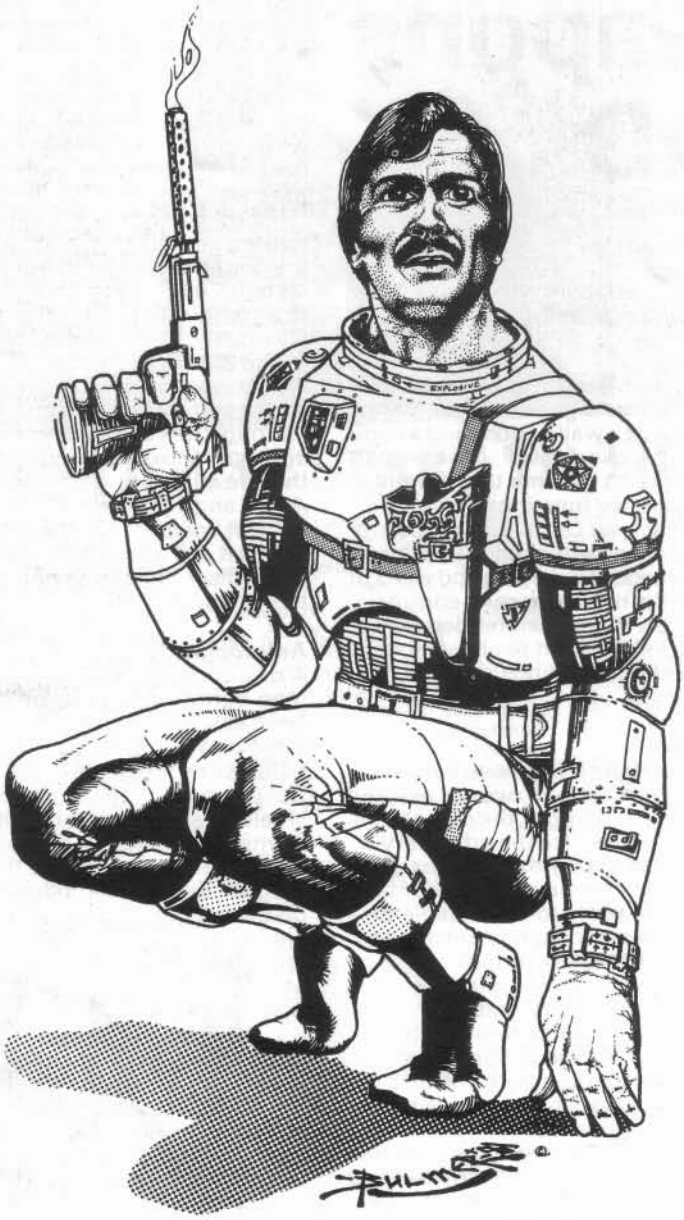
Halnass is immune to all fire and heat attacks, all *death magic* and gas attacks, and the blows of weapons of less than +2 enchantment. Cold-based attacks, on the other hand, do him 25% extra damage, and even cold water does him injury (1-4 points from a pint thrown over him, one point from a splash). He can *produce flame* at will, cause anything burnable he touches to ignite, and thrice per day can *summons* a 12-dice fire elemental [see the *Monster Manual*] or phantom stalker [see *FF*] to serve him freely. On the *Prime Material Plane*, he is 50% likely to be encountered in the company of 5-20 lava children, including 1-2 clerics and sometimes (50%) a magic-user; if he is alone, he can *summons* such a bodyguard if he desires, although they will take 3-6 rounds to arrive.

Quorggg, the Stone Mother, is naturally immune to all earth magic, *petrifaction*, poison and *death magic*; she is treated as always making her saving throw vs *paralysis* and *hold* spells, and she has the same immunity to metal as a lava child - weapons made of any metal simply pass through her body without doing damage. Even wooden or stone weapons must be enchanted to at least +1 to harm the demigoddess, but lightning does her 25% extra damage. She can pass through rock or stone at will, but a *passwall* or *phase door* cast on her while she is doing so does her 4-24 points of damage. Quorggg can *summons* two eight-dice earth elementals [see the *Monster Manual*] per day to do her willing service, and can cast *charm monster* once at any Xorn [*MM*] or Khargra [*FF*] she encounters; she has the same chance of a lava child escort on the race's home plane as Halnass, and the same ability to summons such, but the group in her case will be 5-30 strong, and will include 1-3 clerics, but no magic-users.

The powers of lava child spell casters are detailed in full in the *Fiend Folio*. Clerics of the race are more inclined than their brethren to contact with other races, mainly because they seek magical devices to use in the quest to free their deities.□

Deity	Sphere of Control	Animal	Clerics M	F	N	H	Raiment Head	Body	Colour(s)	Holy Days	Sacrifice Frequency	Form	Place of Worship
Carratriatuh	Greenmen	n/a		X			Bare	Splint Mail	n/a	n/a	n/a	Weapons, Animals	Ruins
Kraada	Frostmen	Ice Toad		X			Bare	Thin Hides	Black, White	New Moon	Monthly	Anything	Hidden Shrine
Zrunta Mountainheart	Mountain Giants	n/a		X			Bare	Skins	Brown	n/a	n/a	n/a	Mountain Caverns
Klagg	Grimlocks	Medusa		X			Bare	Rags	Black	Moonless Nights	Varies	Blood	Underground
Halnass	Lava Children	n/a		X			Bare	Bronze Necklace	Crimson	n/a	Varies	Magic Items	Caves
Quorggg	Lava Children	n/a		X			Bare	Bronze Belt	Black-Brown	n/a	Varies	Magic Items	Caves

Starbase *is a bi-monthly department devoted to readers' ideas for* Traveller, *edited by Bob McWilliams. This issue, a new Imperial organization, also for use with this issue's scenario.*



The Covert Survey Bureau

An Imperial Intelligence Agency by Andy Slack

There are certain tasks which any government must perform, but to which it can never publicly admit; the secret and darker side of diplomacy, also called espionage. The Terran Empire is no exception, and it, too, has an instrument which performs distasteful tasks for the good of the state. This is the Covert Survey Bureau, usually referred to as the CSB; an obscure corner of the Imperial Terran Scout Service whose openly-acknowledged brief is the survey of a newly-discovered cultures to assess the desirability and likely results of more formal contact, and the optimum methods of contacting the culture.

In addition to its stated task, the Bureau also sifts reports by serving and detached scout personnel; monitors and intercepts messages within and beyond the Imperial borders; creates and breaks codes and ciphers; prevents espionage by foreign powers against the Imperium; supports revolutionary, terrorist and pirate organisations whose actions further the state's ends; and conducts espionage operations beyond the Imperium borders. The CSB has a controlling interest in several medium-sized companies, including a merchant shipping line, to aid its operations.

Actual structure is fluid, but in four layers. At the top of the pyramid are administrators, responsible for overall strategy and policy.

The second layer is composed of case officers or directors, local commanders who control and pay agents on a day-to-day basis. These are rarely involved in any dirty work, and normally have a legitimate cover as, for example, an embassy official.

The third layer is that of the agents or operatives, who perform actual operations as directed by a case officer. Their main activity is developing contacts who can pass them useful information, typically by bribery, blackmail, seduction or threats. If sabotage or assassinations are required, these persons carry it out. Agents are normally native to the world of their employment, and frequently believe themselves to be working for someone other than their true employer. Agents are at the full mercy of the local authorities if caught, unlike the case officer, who will either have diplomatic immunity or work from the relative safety of the starport's extraterritoriality. Therefore, agents are told only what they need to know.

The lowest layer consists of contacts, couriers and cut-outs who obtain and transfer information, orders and so on for agents. These are invariably natives and often innocent of any treasonous intent, believing their tasks are legal and for respected citizens; either that, or they don't care who they work for, or think they are working for someone supporting their own ideological position.

Player character agents of the CSB will be to two kinds; the potential case officer and the roving paramilitary troubleshooter. Normally recruited from Imperial service in their thirties, player agents are trained for one year at the Covert Survey School [see *Star Patrol, White Dwarf 20*]; each year thereafter, there is a 1 in 6 chance that they will be recalled for further training, being groomed for promotion. Agents are paid a monthly retainer according to ability - Cr250 for each point that the sum of their intelligence and education exceeds 16, plus a further Cr1,000 for each assignment to Covert Survey, Covert Survey School, or Intelligence School.

The CSB only hires freelance adventurers in the following cases: Where a sacrificial decoy is needed, if risks are too great for their own men, if there is no suitable CSB agent available, or if the Bureau cannot afford to be linked to the operation in question.

Inter-service rivalry between the CSB and the naval intelligence units is great, leading to much intrigue as the services try to discredit each other - this is mainly because they compete for appropriations for a limited budget.

Because of the sheer size of the Empire and the Bureau, different departments often work at cross-purposes; the secretive nature of their work compounds this.□

Treasure Chest *is a regular department featuring readers' ideas for* D&D.

Discs as Weapons in AD&D

by Paul McCree

No doubt many of you will have seen, or at least heard of, Walt Disney's film, *TRON*. The weapons used in the film ('Frisbee'-like discs hurled at the opponent) lend themselves well as additions to the existing *AD&D* stock of weapons.

To use a disc, a character must be both strong and dextrous; he/she must have STR13+ and DEX 14+ to employ the disc effectively. Non-proficiency penalties apply.

Discs are made from lightweight wood or metal, or from bone such as that found in dragon skulls or sections of dragon vertebrae. Damage caused by a bone or wooden disc hurled in combat is 1-4 and 2-5 from a metal disc. Also the disc has a certain chance of stunning the opponent as follows:-

Base 25% chance, modifiers as applicable:

-2% for every HD over 5 up to max of -20% (15HD)

+5% for every HD under 5 up to max of +20% (1HD)

Other modifiers:

+5% if creature is flesh,

+10% if creature has AC7-10,

-10% if creature has AC3-0, creatures with AC0 to -10 cannot be stunned. Once thrown, the disc must be retrieved before it can be cast again, with the exception of magical discs which always return to the caster whether they hit the intended target or not. Some magical discs are listed below.

Vorpal Disc

The disc behaves as the *vorpal sword* in *DMG* in all respects except damage which is 2-7.

Disc of Shock

This disc is a +2 weapon inflicting 2-7 damage and a further 1d6 electrical damage if the to hit roll is exceeded by 3 or more. The disc owner receives a bonus of +2 to all saving throws versus electrical attack.

Torus

This disc is doughnut-shaped. When thrown, the disc floats high in the air, positioning itself over the adversary's head. When this condition is reached, the disc expands and then drops on the opponent, trapping him/her/it as the disc constricts again to a diameter just large enough to allow the victim to breathe. This inflicts 1-6 damage and holds the poor unfortunate until the releasing command word is given. The disc can be thrown *at* the opponent at the owner's discretion, in which case it is at +1 to hit and causes 1-6 damage.

Crystal Disc

This is a glassteeled disc, +1 to hit and inflicting 2-7 damage in combat. When placed against a wall or door and a command word spoken, the disc causes part of the surface to become transparent. This tranparency functions only one way; the disc user can see in, but occupants cannot see the disc user. This transparency functions on doors and walls of up to one foot thick. A second command word cancels this function. Also, when the disc is held up and peered through by the owner, it functions as a *true seeing* spell.

Disc of Eyes

A +3 disc on which has been cast three spells: *enchant an item, wizard eye* and *permanency*. In combat, the disc always position itself to strike the adversary's eyes. If the adversary has no eyes, the disc will strike the torso for 2-7 damage. The 'modified score to sever' table of the *vorpal sword* must be consulted to determine whether the opponent is blinded or not. Note that blindness is permanent. Although Great Helms negate the possibility of blindness, the victim is stunned if a roll of blind is indicated. If cast at an umber hulk, the disc will automatically return to the owner's hand and will remain useless for 1d4 weeks.

When a command word is given, the disc will float away from the owner and will function as a *wizard eye* cast by a 10th level MU. This property can be used but once per day. The disc returns to the user on command or when the power's duration expires.

The disc bears an eye design on one side and this can be used to *hypnotise* opponents as the spell twice per day. Only three of these discs are known to exist.

Disc of Dismissal

This disc is found in two forms; the reusable type (20%), and the once-only use type (80%). The disc's main power is the ability to dispel creatures from planes other than the *Prime Material* back to their plane of origin. Elementals struck by the disc lose 1HD for each successful hit on them until the number of HD falls below the minimum required to maintain the elemental, eg a 12HD elemental needs 4 hits to dispel, while an 8HD elemental requires only 1 hit to dispel. Once back on its own plane, the elemental can regenerate lost hit dice.

Creatures from the outer planes require hits equal to half their HD (fractions rounded up) to dispel. Creatures from the *Ethereal* and *Astral Planes* are not dispelled by the disc, but they do suffer 2-16 damage from a successful cast. Likewise, creatures existing in two or more planes (eg vampires) or whose awareness extends into two or more planes (eg most monsters using gaze weapons) are not dispelled by the disc but take damage from a hit (3-18). Also, when the disc owner has the disc in his/her hand, he/she is rendered immune to gaze attacks.

If the disc is hurled at a high order creature (eg a god, demigod or demon prince) the disc, be it single use or reusable, instantly explodes causing 3-30 damage to all within 40 feet (except the deity). Obviously, the deity will not be amused!

The 80% of these discs with one-use lifetime explode as the target creature is struck sufficient times to dispel it, and although this explosion causes no damage, it temporarily blinds all creatures that view it. Note - this disc can dispel *Astral* and *Ethereal* creatures also, but are still destroyed in the process.

If cast at a *Prime Material* creature, these discs behave as non-magical metal discs.

Anti-Magic Disc

A disc constructed from a magically inert lightweight metal on which has been cast *enchant an item, anti-magic shell*, and *permanency*. The disc behaves as the 6th level MU spell mentioned above in that it can be used as a shield against magical spells and attack forms if it is held out as a barrier between the disc owner and the potential magical threat. In addition to this, the disc has a 25% chance of reflecting any spell cast at the disc owner back at the spell caster. The disc can *dispel illusion* as a 10th level illusionist twice per day.

When thrown in combat, this disc is +1, +2 vs magic using creatures, +3 and double damage vs enchanted creatures; the disc's normal damage is 2-7.

If hurled at a *prismatic sphere*, the disc will pass through it and strike whatever is contained therein without actually dispelling the sphere itself. However, the disc can only perform this function once on any particular sphere, subsequent attempts causing the disc to become useless as a weapon for 1-6 days afterwards. The *Anti-Magic Disc* is the only weapon known that is capable of this action. Very few of these discs exist.

Sonic Disc

This disc has been specifically designed for high-velocity flight and its rim is perforated by many small holes, the effect of which is to produce a high-pitched scream when the disc is in flight. It is this scream that gives the disc its name and power. The sonic whine stuns all hearing beings in a direct 100ft line from the disc thrower (save vs magic allowed at -2 on the die) for 1-4 rounds and deafens them for a further 1-6 turns.

Although this disc is not actually magical, it strikes at +2 to hit because of its high speed and inflicts 3-12 damage for the same reason. Note - because the disc is non-magical, it will not return to the caster's hand.□

SPECIAL BROO
From the people who brought you the best Vargr in the world.

MIDGARDIAN

Don't let BO spoil your social life - use *EVIL AURA*

CONVENTIONAL START TO THE YEAR

After the winter hibernation, convention season started again with *Games Fair* and the first *Northern Games Day*. *Games Fair* was held again at Reading University with Gary Gygax as guest of honour. Apart from *AD&D*, *RuneQuest* and *Traveller* games, there was also an impromptu pinball challenge between Don Turnbull of *TSR UK* and *White Dwarf* editor, Ian Livingstone. Sadly Ian lost the challenge but had an excellent excuse in that he was playing with a bandaged wrist, suffering from squash injuries of a dislocated bone and torn ligaments.

Northern Games Day was held in Manchester at UMIST. Role-playing games, computer games and *Treasure Trap* dominated the weekend. Amazingly enough it did not rain on the Saturday and the members of *Treasure Trap* were able to stage spectacular pitched battles (pictured above) and also issue individual challenges to members of the public. In the photograph above, left, *White Dwarf's* own Jamie Thomson managed to defeat the *Treasure Trap* champion (the one with the hairy legs) to win a free expedition at the *Treasure Trap* castle. Other successes were Michael Brunton and Lindsey Le Doux Paton who won the painting competitions on Saturday and Sunday respectively. Adam Novak won the *AD&D* competition, Charles Prossman the *RuneQuest* competition, and Raymond Pullar the *Traveller* competition.

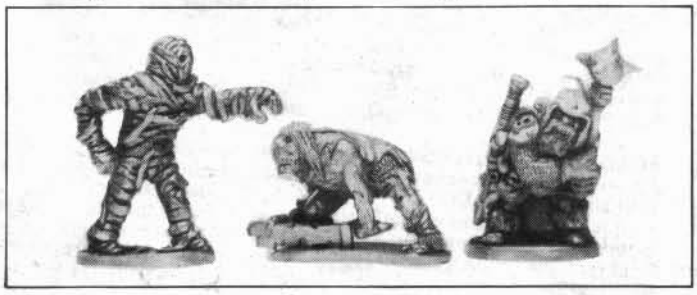
INCREASE IN TRADE FIGURES LIKELY

There has been an increase in the trade figures for this month. A spokesperson for the CBI remained unenthusiastic, pointing out that this was due to the fact that more figures were released. Examples cited were four sets of 15mm adventurers, from *Games of Liverpool*, designed for use with *Fantasy Games Unlimited's Space Opera*. Pictured above are the five *Human Adventurers* of *SOH1*.

Other figures quoted included the new releases from *Chronicle Miniatures* pictured here. They are (from left to right): *CM5: Mummy; CM7: Wight* and *CT7: Evil Dwarf*.

The spokesperson also stated that the increase was not as large as the government would wish us to think because of *Citadel Miniatures* revolutionary new casting techniques which meant that virtually each figure produced was a new creation, citing the newly revamped *Dungeon Adventurer* and *Dungeon Monster Starter Sets* as an example. Two of the new monster set (*Vandamar, Warrior of Chaos*, and *Zombie*) are pictured below, right.

In a written statement last night, the government replied that they thought the figures for the month were very promising.



HERITAGE LOST

The US company *Heritage*, at one time in the thick of the US hobby games industry, has gone into liquidation. Their most popular games will in all probability be available through other companies. Already *Barbarian Prince*, the most popular of their *Dwarfstar Games* has been taken by *Avalon Hill*.

MOTORWAY MADNESS SPREADS

The success of *Car Wars* continues to grow. *Steve Jackson Games* plans to release no less than **six** *Car Wars* expansion sets this year. They will include an *Autoduel Arena*, a *Sunday Drivers* expansion, a supplement entitled *Convoy*, a *Referee's Screen*, and, believe it or not, a *Champions* and *Car Wars* tie-in book.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Avalon Hill have entered the fantasy role-playing field with their new game *Powers & Perils*. However, the game has already earned the unfortunate nickname of *PeePee* in the American trade.

MAKE IT A DATE

Dates have now been fixed for the two major games conventions this year. *Dragonmeet* will be on Saturday, 16th July at the Central Hall, Westminster, London.

Games Day will be later in the year on the weekend November 5th/6th at the newly refurbished Royal Horticultural New Hall, Victoria, London.

SOLO TRANSATLANTIC CROSSING PLANNED

Ian Livingstone and Steve Jackson's series of solo adventures published in the UK by *Penguin* as the *Fighting Fantasy Gamebook* series are to cross the Atlantic. *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain, Citadel of Chaos* and *Forest of Doom* are scheduled to be publiushed in the US by *DEL* in October.

Ian Livingstone's *Dicing with Dragons*, which also contains a solo adventure, will be published in the US by the *New American Library* in November. The American revisions will be done by *White Dwarf's* US contributing editor, Lew Pulsipher.

INVISIBLE FIGURES SEEN IN BLIZZARD PASS

The shadowy figures that lurk in *Blizzard Pass* can now be seen in *TSR*'s new module *M1*. It is a *Basic D&D* solo adventure for thieves and is the first in a planned series of *Invisible Ink Modules*. Certain sections of the module are printed in an invisible ink. When you choose an action, you must rub the appropriate section with a special pen which makes the invisible print appear.

Other new *TSR* modules which should now be available are: *AD&D Modules I2: Tomb of the Lizard King; I3: Pharaoh;* and *I4: Oasis of the White Palm*; and the new *Star Frontiers Module SF2: Starspawn of Volturnus*.

NEXT ISSUE

Irilian is Coming! The first in our six part serialization of a full *AD&D* city; Cthulhu Now, how to hunt the minions of Cthulhu in the 1980's; Shamus gets a case - further tales of Griselda from Pavis; Castles in the Air - Castle theory in *D&D*; the final part in the Inhuman Gods series; *Microview*; *RuneRites*; all the other regular departments and much more.

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Games Day '83 – Events
Games Day is the largest event of its kind in the world. We require experienced Games Group or Clubs to create and run Competition events or participation games of *AD&D, Traveller* and *RuneQuest*; Participation events of the most popular FRPs – for beginners and experienced players; Demonstrations of Fantasy or Historical miniatures wargaming; and participation games of classic boardgames like *Starfleet Battles* and *Car Wars*. You supply the event and referees. I supply advice, play aids, figures, electrical requirements (If computers are to be used) and certain expenses. For further details contact: *Clive Bailey, Games Workshop, 27/29 Sunbeam Road, London NW10 6JP.*

Dragonmeet VI Competitions
Wanted, experienced Games Groups or Clubs willing to create and run Competition adventures of *AD&D, RQ* and *Traveller* at *Dragonmeet VI, July 16th, Central Hall, Westminster, London*. You supply the concept and referees. I supply the advice, play aids, figures, electrical requirements (if computers are involved) and certain expenses. For further details contact me: *Clive Bailey, Games Workshop, 27/29 Sunbeam Road, London NW10 6JP.*

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Miser's Hoard, a different FRP magazine with ideas. For a review see *Dragonlords*. Send 35p for Issue 1, 50p for Issue 2 (+15p p&p) to Ian Mckeown, 22 Hall Lane, Upminster, Essex.

For Sale
FRP items and games. Cherry Lea, Wells Road, Dundry, Bristol.

Postal Chess
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Urgent Message...
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Clubs, contacts and events can be advertised once at no charge up to a maximum of 40 words. Further insertions at the rate of 5p per word.

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Man, Myth & Magic, Wimbledon/Putney
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An *AD&D* postal campaign. Features: Newsletter, cash prize for winner using scoring system. Send SAE to: Mike Cunningham, 104 Blenheim Rd, Reading, Berks RG4 7RR.

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Can you play *T&T, RuneQuest* and do you live near Halifax and are you looking for a club to join, then... contact: Simon Humphreys at weekends or evenings. Tel: Halifax 822837.

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AD&D Ox/Bucks
Two aged players (21-26) in need of haven in Oxford, Bicester or Thame, or players/DM able to get to 49 Brill Rd, Oakley, Bucks. Write or phone: Brill 237243, Phil/Chris Watson. Experience limited but quick to learn.

Help!
17-yr old hopeful FRPGer wishes to contact any players in the Cork area. Will play any, preferably *AD&D* or *Traveller*. Contact: Thomas F O'Neill, Denisfield, Knockgriffin, Co Cork, Eire.

Help
Lonely RPGer, 22, wishes to start gaming – no preference to type. Absolutely no experience. Anyone in same situation or with patience to teach a total idiot please contact: Martin Ford, 82 Southfield Avenue, Watford WD2 4DU.

Help!
Inexperienced adventurer trapped by big green thing with sword+2. Need contact with clubs/players in High Peak area age 12-15, playing *D&D*. Messages received by Dave Seel at New Mills 42917.

Hong Kong
Adult *D&D* players of modest experience would like to meet others, individuals or group. Also interested in other games. Contact: Paul 5 - 97001 (evenings).

AD&D/DragonQuest USA
American student seeks contact with all *AD&D* and *DQ* enthusiasts. All ideas wanted, all letters answered: John Dwyer, 6 Heather Lane, Walpole, MA 02081, USA.

Wanted
In Salford/Manchester area. First level Magic-user requires DM and any other *Basic D&D* participants who would like to form a group. Send SAE to Andrew Devine, 75 Doveleys Rd, Salford 6, Lancs. First seven accepted.

Wanted
AD&D, Car Wars, SFB players in Willenhall area. Willing to play other games. Contact: John Aston, 50 Stubbington Close, Willenhall, Staff, WV13 2QF. Tel: 636410.

Superhero Design Contest
Design a hero/villain for any superhero system and you could win £10. All entries must be original. Will be judged on character conception and originality. Send entries to *Supercomp*, 2 Essex Court, Hammersmith Grove, London W6. All entries become the property of *Adventure Guild*. Closing date: 1st September 1983.

Postal Campaign
Anyone who is interested in taking part in an *AD&D* postal campaign please send and SAE to: Richard Downes, 2 Brisbane Ave, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1XZ.

D&D En France
Young French boy – DM in Paris but simple player in England, nearly 14-years old is looking for an English friend to introduce him into a *D&D* club – and a nice family to stay with as a paying guest in the meantime so as to improve his English. Anytime from June 20th to July 28th. Thanks and write to: Bruno Cailloux, 21 Quai Alphouse, le Gallo, 92100 Boulogne, France.

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Contact: P Bone, 35 St Margarets, Stevenage, Herts. Tel: 51741.

BATH
Bath University D&D Club
Games: *AD&D*, some *Starfire* and a little *RuneQuest*.
Time: 2.30 to late Wednesdays, 2.30 to late Friday during term.
Place: University main campus.
Contact: The Secretary (John Kirkpatrick) D&D Soc, Univ. Bath, Claverton, Bath, Avon. Phone the university, ask for the Students Union general office and leave a message.

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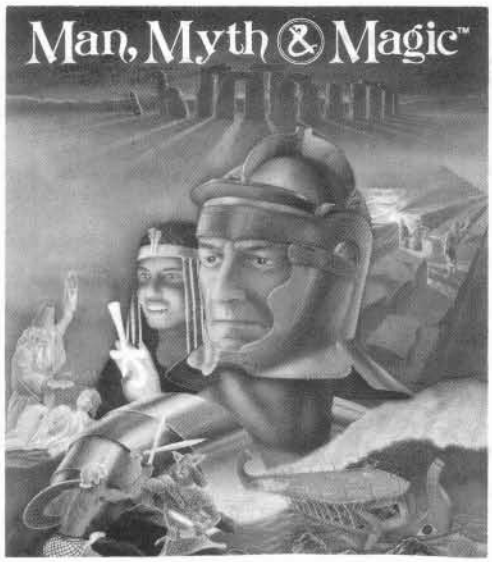

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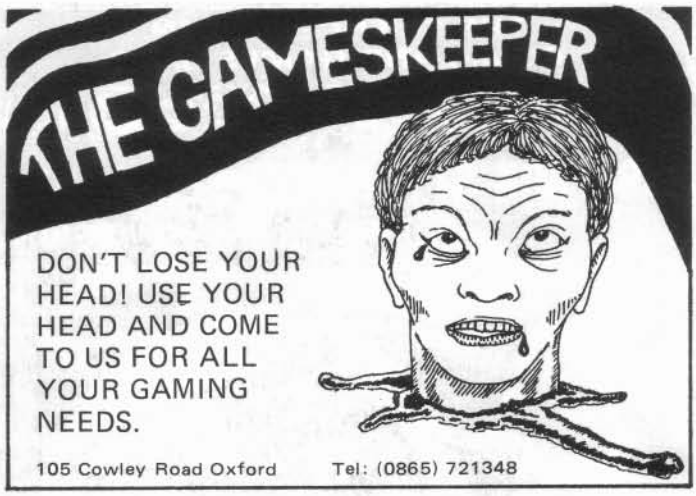

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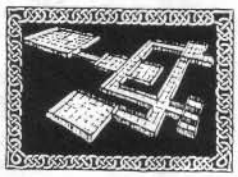

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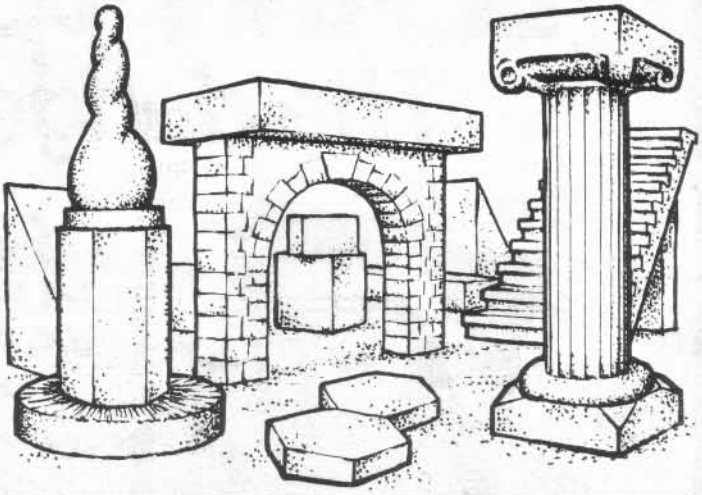

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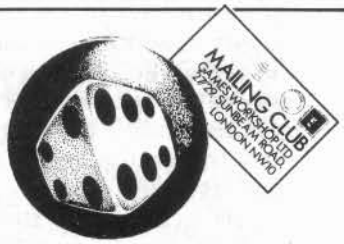

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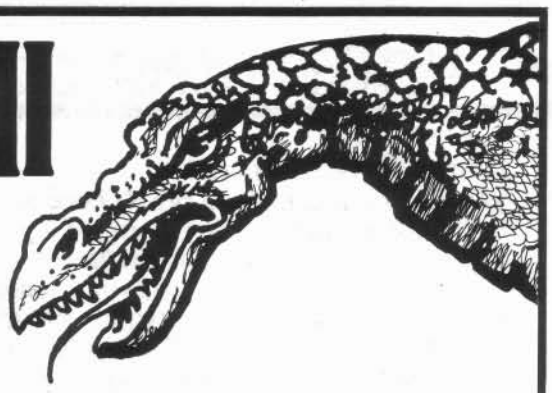

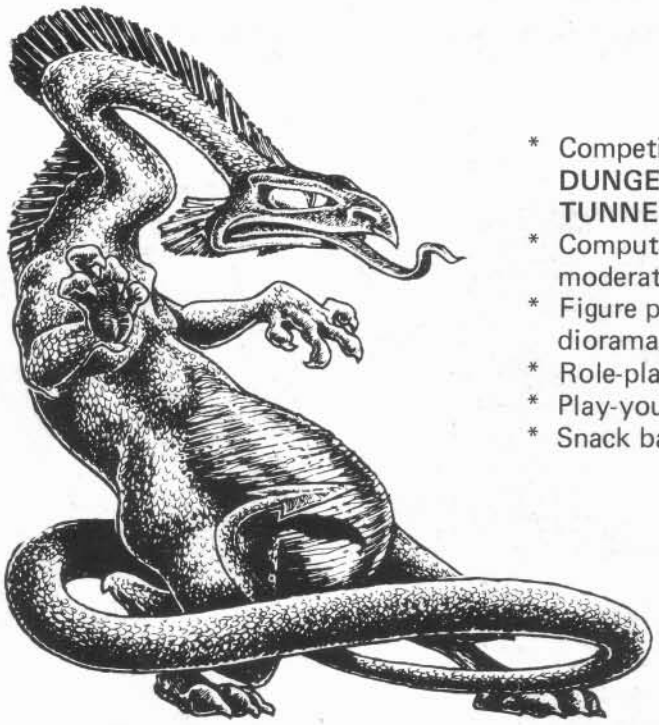

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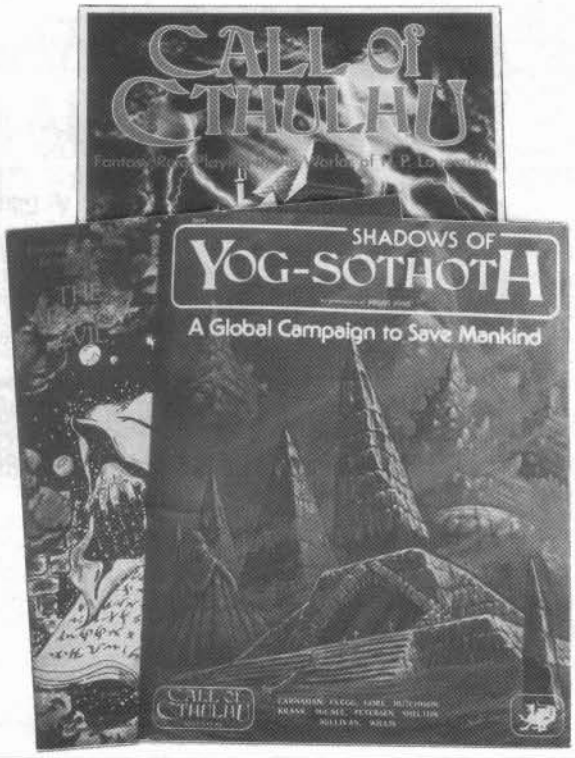

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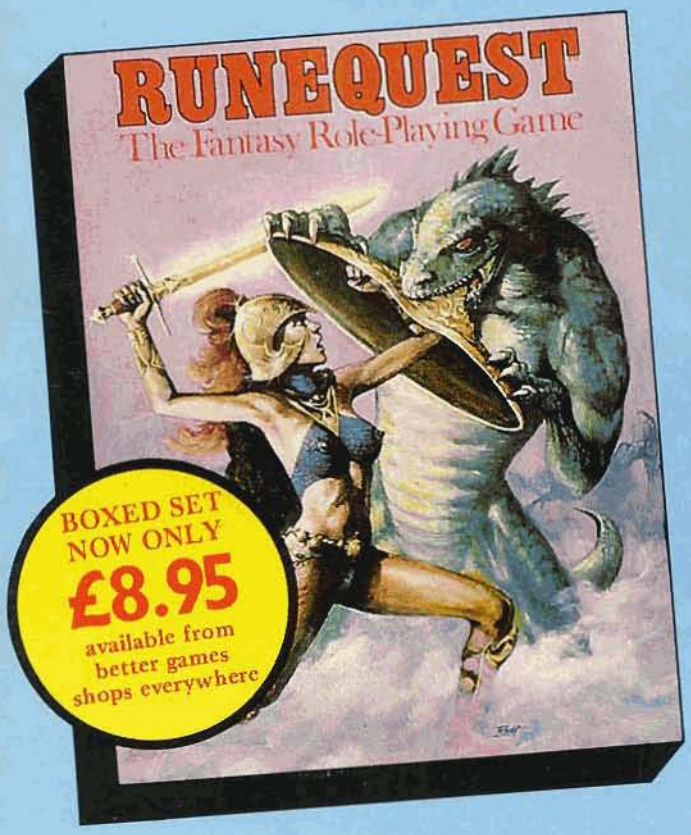

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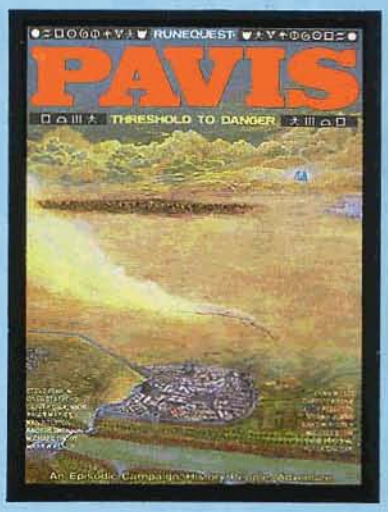

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